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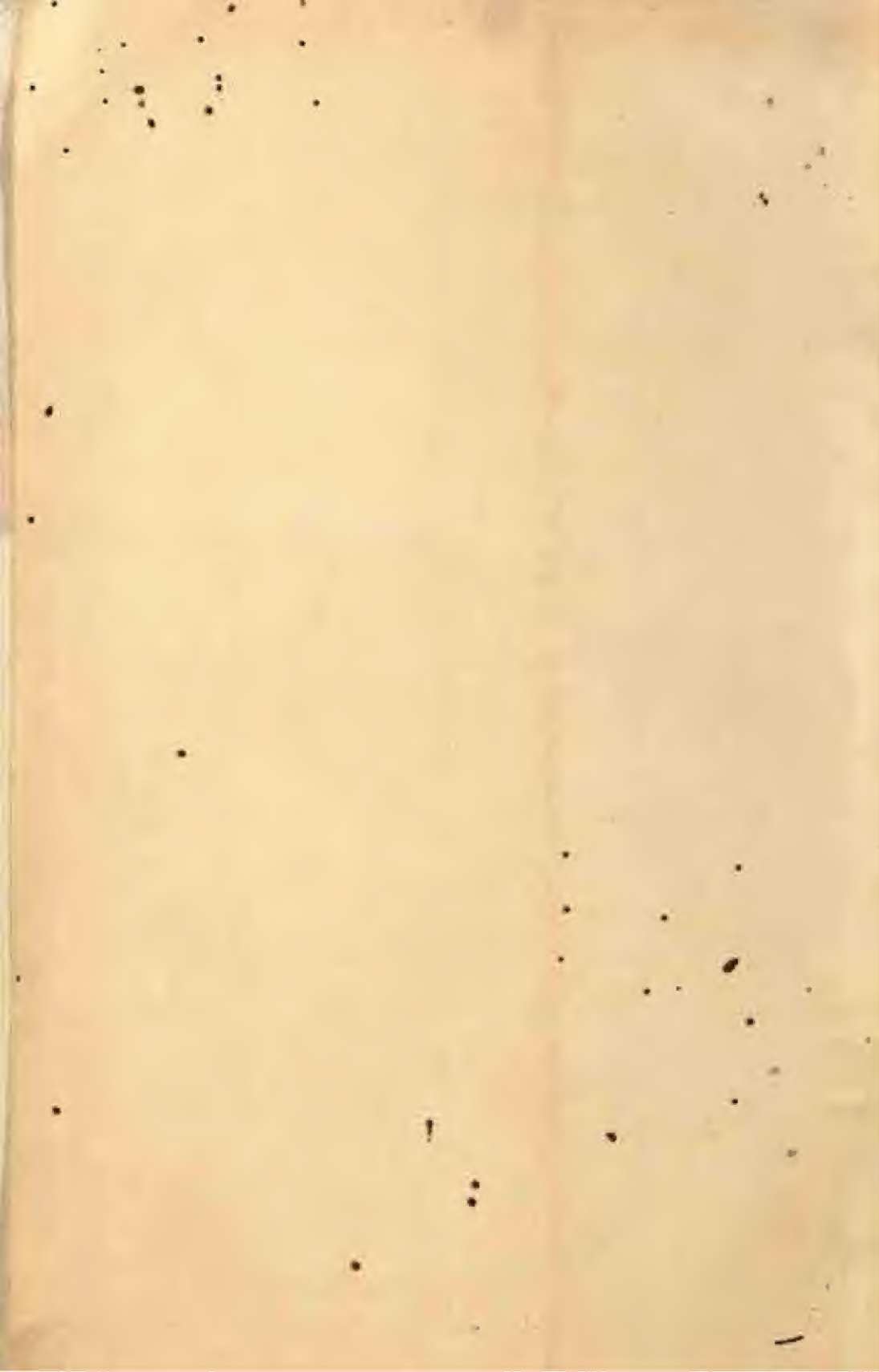
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THE SCHWEICH LECTURES ON  
BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, 1934

ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY  
OF IRAN





# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF IRAN

BY

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## PREFACE

IF one must compose a short course of lectures from a vast archaeological material, collected during long years, and yet unpublished, the choice of subjects must be determined by a leading idea, the purpose of the lecture. To attract attention to this new matter, one might show the most beautiful examples, or choose a group of objects to prove some new thesis. I risk renouncing beauty and special problems, and prefer to speak about such objects as intrinsically illuminate the history of Iran, of which we know so very little.

The idea occurred to me when reading E. G. Browne's great *Literary History of Persia*, which is history abstracted from literature. In a similar way history can be written from archaeological monuments, in defining archaeology as something wider than a mere history of ancient art, and in taking as an archaeological document every object from which conclusions as to the political and cultural developments of antiquity may be drawn, whether it be architecture, sculpture, small works of art and industry, inscriptions and other written documents, or, otherwise, myths and legends, coins, royal names, titles, and protocols. Such an extension of the notion of archaeology and archaeological documents is as justified as the use of archaeological material for reconstructing history. Prehistory is entirely based on archaeology; in the transitional stages to history, archaeology is the main source; and for all ancient history it explains, more than inscriptions and literature, the growth of cultural life. It is the archaeological method, in dealing with all that disparate material, that makes it a unity.

But, when trying to put into action that idea, it soon became clear that it would require three large volumes with full documentary evidence, instead of three short lectures. As the three volumes remain to be written, the lectures can only be

an essay of how such a book might be. The title 'Archaeological History', hence, is a *totum pro parte*, an aim not attained. These preliminary remarks are intended to ward off the impression that what I shall expose is a complete medley. It may well sound desultory if I jump from architecture to legends, from sculpture to coins, from paintings to inscriptions, but it is not losing the thread. For the quality common to all such material is that it has something to tell about cultural developments of high antiquity, which means that it is material eminently archaeological in the real sense of that word.

The first of these lectures is printed in a larger form than it was possible to give to the lecture, which had to be cut down to suit the time-limit. The two others are printed almost exactly as they were delivered. Of the pictures shown, only a part could be reproduced: not meant as final, but as preliminary publication. A short report had been given, without illustrations, in *ZDMG.* 1926, of the earlier explorations.

I am indebted to Mr. Donald McCown for his help in reading the manuscript, and to Sir Frederic Kenyon, who gave me valuable suggestions in reading the proofs.



## CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	v
LIST OF PLATES . . . . .	ix
LIST OF FIGURES IN THE TEXT . . . . .	xi
LECTURE I. THE PRE-ACHAEMENIAN AND THE ACHAE- MENIAN EPOCHS (3 December 1934) . . . . .	i
LECTURE II. THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD (5 December 1934) . . . . .	44
LECTURE III. THE SASANIAN EPOCH (7 December 1934)	76
INDEX . . . . .	109



## LIST OF PLATES

- i. Map of Achaemenian Empire.
- ii. Rock-Sculpture of Kurangūn.
- iii. Rock-Sculpture of Kurangūn.
- iv. Rock-Sculpture of Bahrām II, at Naqsh i Rustam over old Elamite Sculpture.
- v. Rock-Tomb of Dā u Dukhtar.  
Achaemenian Tombs of Ākhur i Rustam.
- vi. Temple of Khurha.
- vii. Kūh i Khwāja.  
Rock-Sculptures of Mithradates II and Gotarzes II at Bisutun.
- viii. Kūh i Khwāja, front of Gallery and Temple.  
Kūh i Khwāja, Gallery with paintings.
- ix. Kūh i Khwāja, the two periods of the main façade of the court.
- x. Graffito on fragment of Sculpture of Darius, from Persepolis.  
Kūh i Khwāja, stucco ornament.
- xi. Firuzabad, Ardashir I and Ardavan V.  
Shapur, Shapur I and Valerian.
- xii. Shapur, the army of Shapur I.  
Shapur, saddle-horse of Shapur I.
- xiii. Shapur, Tribute-bearers.
- xiv. Kale i Dukhtar, near Firuzabad.
- xv. Takht i Rustam, near Teheran.  
Firuzabad, courtyard of Ardashir's Palace.
- xvi. Firuzabad, Palace of Ardashir I.
- xvii. Madrasa i Ghiyāthiyya at Khargird.
- xviii. Island of Khārg, Christian Catacombs.
- xix. Khārg, front of Catacomb.  
Khārg, interior of Catacomb.
- xx. Hamadan, Tomb of Esther.  
Lindjān, near Isfahan, Jewish sanctuary.



## • LIST OF FIGURES IN THE TEXT

1. Fragments of bronze vessel from Nihawand . . .	7
2. Assyrian representation of a north-western Iranian town . . .	13
3. Assyrian representation of Kišesim . . . . .	14
4. Assyrian representation of Harhār . . . . .	15
5. Assyrian representation of Mušasir . . . . .	16
6. Wood capitals from rustic buildings . . . . .	33
7. Modern village mosques and rest-houses . . . . .	34
8. Bronzes from Van, British Museum . . . . .	36
9. Kings enthroned, from coin devices . . . . .	72
10. Graffito of Shapur, elder brother of Ardashir I, at Persepolis . . .	80
11. High-place and lower temple of Kale i Dukhtar, Khurasan . . .	89
12. Fire-temple Ār-tâq, near Gira . . . . .	91
13. Fire-temple Ār-tâq, near Gira . . . . .	92





## LECTURE I

### THE PRE-ACHAEMENIAN AND THE ACHAEMENIAN EPOCHS

THE whole Near East, its plains and mountains, has been inhabited by man since the stone age, and compared with European sites of the same age the oriental sites show a high degree of culture. With the aeneolithic age, the introduction of copper, a separation begins. The mountain lands, occupied since the palaeolithic period, and hence more advanced, remain behind. The alluvial lands like Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria afforded easier conditions for settling in villages and towns.

Iran, from this period, was to Babylonia as northern Europe was to the Mediterranean countries in the second and the early first millennia B.C. After 3000 B.C. Babylonia enters into the light of history, producing writing that we can read, whereas Iran does not seem to have taken part in the intellectual developments that led to writing. That does not mean that there had been no intercourse, no cultural contact; on the contrary, connexions must have been common, for the mountains owned the metal that distinguishes the period. And just as in later historical times, amicable relations must always have alternated with hostile ones, with the tendency of extending political influence in either direction. In Iran, too, documents may be found, and a few of them have been found, that will spread the light of history on those lands. But, at present, during the third and second millennia Iran is for us a prehistoric land.

Western Iran (Pl. I), in this old application of the name, includes Armenia, which, with its prodigal wealth of metals and its central position between the lands of old oriental history and Asia Minor, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and South Russia, must be regarded as the true home of



aeneolithic metallurgy. The farther back in history, the greater becomes the importance of this almost unexplored country.

We know little about the race and language of the population during this remote period. Relatively best known is Elam, a part of the alluvial plains projecting into the mountains which has always been the object of contention between the mountaineers and the plainsmen, and developed, at least as early as old Sumer, a civilization of its own with a peculiar script, called proto-Elamite.<sup>1</sup> It is unknown how far this script may have been used in the interior of the country. Although it is not generally admitted, I believe that the Elamites, their northern neighbours the *Kasse-Kossaeans*, farther in the east the *Ellipi*, to the north the *Lullubi* and *Guti*, and adjoining them the *Urartu*, which means all the peoples of the western border of the highland, and, from archaeological reasons, at least a great part of the inhabitants of that highland itself, belonged to one and the same ethnic and linguistic group, and that this group—again an opinion not yet strictly provable and not generally accepted—was related to the aboriginal inhabitants of Mesopotamia (a term excluding Iraq) and parts of Asia Minor, whether they are to be called *Mitanni*, *Hurri*, *Subaraeans*, or *Hittites*.

If a name is wanted for the pre-Iranian population of Iran, it is advisable to speak of *Caspians*. This name we can trace in ancient times over many parts of the plateau, and it is still living in the name of the Caspian Sea, the Caspian Gates.<sup>2</sup>

Only a few monuments show us how these Caspians appeared. One of the three rock-sculptures at *Sarpul*, on the

<sup>1</sup> Elam is a Semitic appellation; the proper name was *Haltamti*, possibly *Halpirti*, *Hapirti*.

<sup>2</sup> This again is a matter of contest, but I consider the names Caspian and Kossaeon as identical: *κασσαίοι* is the Greek transformation of Aram. *qussāyē*, preserved in mod. *Ba-qṣā*. Akk. *kaššū*, *kaššē*, from which is derived Hekataios' *κασσαίοι*, is the native name with Akk. endings; all of them presuppose genuine *kaš* from which the true plural would be *kašip* attested by Greek *κάσπιτοι*.



Baghdad-Hamadan road, shows a king of the Lullu, called Annubānini, before a goddess with the Akkadian name Innin<sup>na</sup>. The king puts his foot on a conquered enemy, while the goddess leads two more, and in a lower register, of smaller scale, there are six more captives. The inscription, in Akkadian, has been deciphered, and fixes, in harmony with the style of the sculpture, the time of the monument as that of Naram-Sin of Akkad. On his famous stele in the Louvre, the masterpiece of all Sumerian art, that king is himself represented as conqueror of the same Lullu. If that conquest had been a lasting one, the rock-sculptures ought to be somewhat older; allowing for the oscillation of 120 years in all the dates of the first half of the third millennium, that would mean about 2670 or 2550 B.C.

A second of the Sarpul sculptures shows also a king, most probably Annubānini, with a defeated enemy before the symbol of the sun and crescent. On the base I discovered another Akkadian inscription, badly preserved. The only passage I have been able to decipher so far literally repeats part of the first inscription. A third sculpture shows him before the goddess alone, without inscription. Very probably this king Annubānini is not only the hero of an old Akkadian legend, but also the eponym of the land *Bit-Hamban*, OP. *kampanda*, famous as the place of the monument of Darius, Behistun.

Not far to the north-west of Sarpul, at *Hōrēn*, there is another rock-sculpture, similarly representing a triumph, in a much more ungainly way than the Annubānini sculptures. The Akkadian inscription does not allude to any historical event. The author of the picture, SAR-bāni-bīrini (correcting previous readings), bears, himself, a name that is at least partly Akkadian, whereas his father Ikkip-šahmat (*sic*) has a native name of Subaraean character. Neither has any titles. If the clumsiness of the work be not decadent, it ought to be earlier than Annubānini.

These people wear a simple loyn-cloth, which is also the usual dress in Sumer and Mesopotamia during the first half



of the third millennium. Their weapons are the bow, a sort of boomerang, a metal axe, and also a prehistoric stone axe. Unlike the Sumerians, but after the custom of the Semites, the men are wearing rich ornaments.

The largest of these rock-sculptures, discovered in 1924, lies at *Kurangūn*, nearer to Persepolis than to Susa (Pls. II and III). High on a hill, over a precipice above the river, accessible only from the top of the hill by a small descending staircase, lies a place of ancient cult, a narrow platform with sculptures. The main picture shows a divine couple with worshippers. The god sits on a throne formed by a coiled snake. The cult of snakes seems to have been as common in oldest Iran as in pre-Aryan India. This is autochthonous; some details are of Sumerian origin, e.g. the crown with pairs of detached horns is common in Sumer previous to the Akkadian period. In his hands the god holds the vase with the water of life, which is flowing towards the worshippers on both sides. In front of the god is an object similar to certain Hittite altars. The goddess, looking very amiable, but with her figure incomplete, seems to be sitting on an animal like some Sumerian goddesses. Of the worshippers the outline only can be distinguished: men and, as second figures right and left, women, wearing a still longer dress, almost the Hittite trailing skirts, and a head-dress different from that of the men. The masculine head-dress resembles the Phrygian cap with its point falling over in front. God and goddess wear long side-curls from the temples, like the old Hittite heads from Tell Halaf, especially the famous enthroned goddess of Baron von Oppenheim. Of the attendants there must have been originally about forty, some of whom have fallen down the precipice. They are stepping down the staircases and wear, with the exception of the first figure, a long pigtail. The pigtail also occurs on rare figurines from Nihawand. On the other hand, it is found with certain figures from Asia Minor and among Egyptian representations of Hittites. That surely indicates more than just a similar custom, viz. ethnical relationship. The dress of these



men is no longer the simple kilt, but a longer skirt that reaches down to the knees.

But, more remarkable is the fact that all these figures are drawn in pure profile, a mode of projection unknown to the Ancient East, including Egypt. It is a principle that cannot have been invented by one artist for one isolated work, and proves that Kurangūn stands for many monuments still unknown or lost. In spite of the number of thoughts, regarding cult and art, borrowed from Sumer, this mode of projection reveals an artistic independence which renders the dating difficult. Some peculiarities still resemble the style of the Sargonid epoch, but as a whole it is hardly older than the following Gudea-period.

Almost a replica of the Kurangūn sculpture must have once existed at *Naqsh i Rostam*, the burial-place of the Achaemenid kings (Pl. IV). At the end of the third century A.D. Bahrām II had a new sculpture executed over the old one. Of the original sculpture, the coiled snakes are still discernible, on which two gods in Sumerian dress are enthroned. To the right, a standing attendant has been allowed to remain intact. He shows best the strange tailored gown and the head-dress. To the left of the Sasanian king the faint outline of a standing figure can be distinguished, and at the end, clearly, a female head with a turreted crown, possibly of a queen. The whole subject must have much resembled the picture of Kurangūn. Being intentionally chiselled off, the traces no longer allow the exact determination of their style. The sculpture might be close in time to Kurangūn, about 2400 B.C., or it might belong to the second half of the second millennium. In any case, the sculpture on the rock, over a spring now dried up, marks a place of worship, and this sanctuary is only about three miles away from the vast mounds of Istakhr in Marwdasht. At least, the sculpture proves that the cultural influence of Elam extended as far as Marwdasht and Persepolis. But, as a matter of fact, it proves more. In the neighbourhood of Kurangūn I discovered a wall of bricks inscribed with the name of the



Elamite king ShutrukNahhunte, about 1200 B.C.; not only Elamite civilization but the empire extended to the plain of Tulaspid, from whence an easy road leads in three days' riding to Marwdasht, the road that Alexander followed. The conclusion is: the Elamite empire extended over the plain of Persepolis.<sup>1</sup>

Small objects of art from that old period of Iran, showing human representations, are extremely rare. In 1923 I saw, in the Russian Consulate at Isfahan,<sup>2</sup> a little bronze figure of a captive resembling closely the file of captives on the Annubānini sculpture at Sarpul, but discovered near Isfahan. Two diminutive figurines of stone come from Nihawand, one of them a naked captive, the other wearing a pigtail.

Not of higher artistic merit, but of greater historical significance, are the designs in repoussé on a bronze vessel in my collection from Nihawand, Fig. 1. The subject is a festive procession. Four gods on their thrones, which look like small foot-stools, are preserved. They all seem to hold a fruit or flower. Of another seated figure, in the opposite direction, only a fragment remains. To the right four or five men are walking, two of them with musical instruments, two clapping their hands. The dress is uniformly the Sumerian flounced and tufted garment, but a late form of it. There is something not clear about the faces: either they have no chin, no nose, or no mouth. The head-dress, too, is indistinct; in outline it comes near to that of the rock-sculptures. The bronze vessel is hardly older than the time of the third dynasty of Ur, which signifies also for Sumer a period of already advanced decadence (about 2300 B.C.).

In the composition of the population of Iran, a great and decisive change takes place after the beginning of the first millennium, and with it begins Iran's historical role, in contrast to the prehistoric character of the preceding civilization.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *MAoG.* iv. 83 f., and *AMI.* i. 114 n., also my routier in *Petermann's Mitlg.* 1907, 3 and 4.

<sup>2</sup> Now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow; according to the chemical analysis the bronze contains some zinc.

The new people that bring the change are the *Aryans*. We meet with their first traces in Mesopotamia about 1450 B.C. There appears a kingdom of *Mitanni*, the population of which speaks and writes an aboriginal language, whereas the rulers, according to their names, were *Indo-Aryans*. On their behalf, a little later, the Hittite political treaties are sworn to, not only by Hittite, Mitanni, and the gods of other nations con-

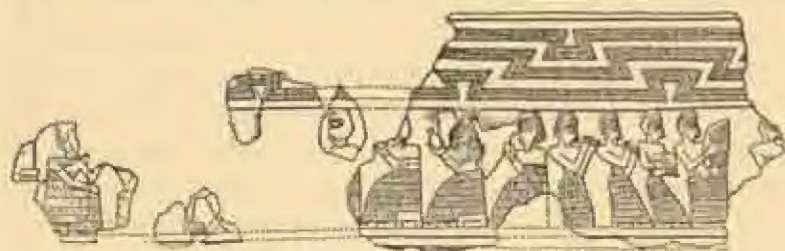


FIG. 1. Fragments of bronze vessel from Nihawand.  $\frac{1}{4}$  nat. size.

cerned, but by Mithra and Varuna, Indra and the Twins, Nasatyas.<sup>1</sup>

At first they were believed to be the ancestors of the Indo-Aryans and the Iranians, the Aryans themselves. But their language has been found out to be not only Indo-Aryan, but even, against expectation, to contain early Prakrit elements.<sup>2</sup> Now the original home of the Aryans is known. It is *Ērānvej*, the land of the two rivers Oxus and Iaxartes, Khwārizm and Samarkand. The only possible way of reaching Mesopotamia from there is through Iran. And the only possibility of reconstructing the events is by comparing them with an historical parallel, rather well known, the migration of the *Saka* about 130 B.C. These, too, were Aryans, their last remnant, who did not emigrate on the earliest occasions, occupying the same land from time immemorial down to the middle of the second century B.C., when great movements, originating in Central Asia, forced them to leave their home.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The tablets of Kikkuli of Mitanni, found at Boghazkoi, show these people as great breeders of race-horses.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. *satta* = seven, not *sapta*.

<sup>3</sup> For the whole history cp. *AMI*. iv. 4.



Hence the same event happened three times: the first group of the Aryans to emigrate were the Indo-Aryans, the second the Iranians, the last the Saka. After a short migratory period in what is now Russian Turkistan, they entered Iran through the natural northern gate of the highland, near Sarakhs, towards Herat. Only shortly before, Mithradates I had created the Arsacid empire in Iran, now ruled by one of his successors, Phraates II Arsakes Theopator, just entangled in a war with Antiochos VII Eusebes. The Saka overran the whole newly-established empire of Iran. Groups of them separated from the main body and successfully founded the Saka dynasty of Adiabene, capital Kirkuk, possibly at the same time, between 128 and 125 B.C., also that of Charakene-Muhammera. After a short anarchic period in Iran, Mithradates II the Great restored order; the Saka were allowed to settle down in the south-east, Arachosia, and Mithradates assumed, probably in 111 B.C., the title 'great king of kings'. The name of the Saka is retained to the present day in that of Sistān, old Sakastān, a small part only of their vast dominions. From Arachosia they entered India by the Bolan passes, and founded a short-lived empire, which extended as far as the gates of Delhi and Bombay.

From this analogy we can judge the appearance of the Indo-Aryans in Mesopotamia. They started from the same land, they made the same stop in Arachosia, they eventually ended in the same land. Therefore the Mitanni dynasty, too, must have been a group of successful condottieri detached from the main body, when it passed through eastern Iran towards India. And the initial date of the dynasty contains also a date for the Indo-Aryan migration: the Saka did not wander for more than a few years. These movements must come to pass in a catastrophic way, since the immigrants come with all their flocks and are bound to find new pastures as soon as possible. So far as we can see, the Mitanni dynasty began c. 1450 B.C.: the Indo-Aryan migration must have happened between 1500 and 1450 B.C. Nothing more is heard of them; they disappear in unknown India. The expres-



sion 'Indo-Aryans' is anticipating: they no longer spoke Aryan, but they had not yet settled in India.

In the same way the name of the Iranians, their nearest relatives, must be used anticipatorily. The name is derived from the geographical and political name *Āryānām Khshathram* 'the Empire of the Aryans', from which a new ethnicon *Ērānī* is derived. The Old Persian inscriptions do not mention that name, but the later official designation *Ērānshahr* implies the old form, and in the Avestic writings it appears with a substitution of more poetical words for the official *Khshathram* 'empire'. The first mention as a political term is Eratosthenes' *Ariana*; the great geographer and librarian of Alexandria comprises under that name, in the second half of the third century B.C., those parts of the old empire which had at that time regained independence.

The Iranians appear to us for the first time in the Assyrian annals of Salmanassar III, 836/5 B.C.,<sup>1</sup> when, between the Urmiya Lake and the high plain of Hamadan, he came into touch with two of the five great Iranian tribes that later form two of the five really Iranian satrapies of the Achaemenian empire: the *Amadai-Māda-Medes* and the *Parsuaš-Pārsa-Persians*. The *Parthava-Parthians* become known a little later, but the eastern tribes of the *Bactrians* in northern, the *Arachosians* or *Thamanaeans-Sāmāna* in southern, Afghanistan appear only after Darius' time.

The Assyrians did not distinguish between Medes and Persians, nor between them and the Parthians, when they first came to know the latter under Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. Like the Greeks, they call all of them Madai-Medes. It is a common rule: the generalization of an individual name that entered first into the horizon of a nation. Parsuaš is more exactly a district name. The passage that makes its situation clearest is that where Sargon enumerates (1) Ellip, i.e. Persian Irāq; (2) bit-Hamban, i.e. Kampana-Behistun; (3) Pārsua; (4) Mannaia, south of the Urmiya Lake; (5) Urartu,

<sup>1</sup> Annals, obv. ll. 110-26; already H. Winckler, *Unters. z. Ao. Gesch.*, 1889, p. 109 f.



west and north of the lake. Parsuaš may be defined as the present Ardalān and Garrūs with the towns Sihna and Bījār. It seems to have been made an Assyrian province about 755 B.C.; for how long is doubtful.<sup>1</sup>

The Iranian tribes at that period were not yet definitely settled; they were still moving. And, similar to the problem of the date of the older Indo-Aryan migration, this status indicates that their immigration cannot have happened a very long time before. Alone, the *argumentum ex silentio* would not be very strong.

A linguistic observation becomes valuable in connexion with this chronological problem: the region east of the Caspian Gates was called from the oldest times up to the present day *Khvār*, OP. \**hvāra*, Ar. \**svāra*. It is the narrow strip of cultivable land between the high Alburz (Demawand) and the interior Salt-Desert. The mountains themselves are called 'the mountains in front of Hvāra'—*patiśhvāra*.<sup>2</sup> That name is a compound of the prep. *pati* 'before' and *hvāra*. One of the most apparent differences between Aryan and Iranian is the change of original *s* into *h*. In compounds, after *u* or *i*, the *s* may be preserved in the shape of *śh*,<sup>3</sup> but only if the compound be older than the consummated change of *s* into *h*. As this change of sound destroys the similarity between

<sup>1</sup> Forrer, *Prov. Eintlg. d. assyr. Reichs*, 1921, p. 89 f., thinks, on account of the letter Harper n. 165, that the writer Bēl-Ibni has been governor of Parsuaš and, since he appears later on, after 648, as *rab-rēšē*, that all the *rab-rēšē* have been at the same time governors of Parsuaš—an assumption under which Parsuaš would have still been an Assyrian province after 648 B.C. The deduction is not really convincing. A passage from the eighth campaign of Sanherib rather gives the impression that Parsuaš was lost then, in 690 B.C.; at any rate it was so in the beginning of Esarhaddon's reign. Cp. Sarg. cyl. I. 14 f.; *Ann.* 8, 8.

<sup>2</sup> In Esarhaddon's Annals, c. 680, *patuś-arra*, in Darius' inscription of Behistun *patiś.hvāra*—in the ethn. *pātis.hvāriš*, with *vridhhi* and *i*-suffix, Gr. *παρμαχοπέρις*; in Sasanian time *patiśhvār-gar*; later simply in local idiom *tabaristān* 'mountain land'.

<sup>3</sup> Darius calls himself in his tomb-inscription 'a good champion' *hušhamaranakara*, compound of *hu-* 'good' with *hamarana-kara* 'maker of fight', Old Ind. *samarana*.



the uncombined word and the compound, OP. restores it by dissimilating *sh* into *sh* plus *h*. The immigrants that gave the name *pati-svāra*, dissimilated by OP. into *patiś-hvara*, to the district, did not yet speak real Iranian but an Aryan dialect. The region is close to that in which they become mentioned in 836. It is not logical to assume a very long space of time for the migrations of those cattle-breeders. The date of the occupation of \*Svāra-Khwār cannot be reasonably put anterior to 900 B.C. That furnishes us with an upper time-limit for the Iranian dialects, of great consequence for many problems of Iranian prehistory.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of their early appearance the Iranians come into touch with three political powers in north-west Iran: (1) the Assyrians, (2) the Urartaeans, (3) the Man-naeans.

Assur is known. The history and archaeology of Urartu-Armenia begins to clear up, in spite of the country's being closed more than ever, by the progress made in deciphering the inscriptions. It is the Biblical land Ararat. The Man-naeans, least known of the three, are the inhabitants of the land *Man*, the Minni of the Bible. According to the Tash-tepe inscription, their centre was near Tashtepe, ancient *Mesta*, south of the Urmiya Lake.<sup>2</sup> A bilingual inscription on the Kelishin pass, at the Turco-Persian frontier, mentions an

<sup>1</sup> A lower limit is given by an inscription of Artaxerxes I, c. 450, which is written in Middle Persian, but disguised as OP. by archaic orthography, cp. *AMI*, vii. i.\* As the idiom of the ruling people, Old Persian was most exposed to change. The Gathic is attested only in the hymns attributed to Zarathustra's own epoch. The Avestic may have lasted longer, but c. 400 B.C., before the conquest of Alexander, no old dialect was any longer living in Iran. Linguistic changes indicate intellectual ones, which always precede the political changes. The OP. language, hence, would have lasted from 900 to 450 B.C., a space of time to be called a long one, as it was supported neither by great literature nor by common use of writing. No exceedingly high antiquity can therefore be attributed to Zarathustra and the Avestic writings, but the Avesta contains, in some of the *Tasht*, rather large parts that are pre-Zarathustrian.

<sup>2</sup> Herkataios calls *Hyōpe* the capital of *Mantiāna*.



important town, Muşasir, not far from there, which belonged to the same culture, though not to the same state.

A fourth political power appears in the inscription of Sargon: Elli or *Ellipi*. As the topographical indications show it contiguous to the interior frontiers of Elam, and at the same time in the direction south-east of Behistun and Hamadan, it must be localized in Persian 'Irâq, unless it be Isfahan itself. The ruler of Ellipi is the only one to whom Sargon accords the title of king; the land must have been the most powerful of the period. Its name, resembling Lullubi, \*Kassipi, shows that it had an autochthonous population, though one of the king's sons has the Iranian name Ispabâra 'horseman'.

That first period lasts 150 or not more than 200 years, until the foundation of the Median empire. For the cultural development these first steps were decisive. The Assyrian annals, especially the records of Sargon's eighth campaign,<sup>1</sup> give us a vivid picture of the highly civilized state of those regions. A number of the localities named may be identified, and the general course of the campaign around the Urmiya Lake and far into the interior of Adharbaijan is clear. Almost everywhere buildings with wooden columns and roofs are mentioned—to which the Assyrians were unaccustomed. The town of Ushqaya had walls 8 cubits thick; Aniaštania, between Ušqaya and Tarwakisa, and Tarwakisa-Tawriz itself had double walls and ditches. Ulhu, on the foot of the Kispal hill, had a canal as large as the Euphrates and a grove of old plane-trees like a forest, 'the pride of its palace'; the roof of that palace was of fragrant cypresses. Twenty-one towns of Sangibuti in the Arzabia hills had walls 120 brick-layers high (c. 15 m.), large gates with towers, woodwork of cypresses, houses built with art, gardens, vineyards, and woods. In Armarili, near the Armenian frontier, the town Hundur is described as having double walls, gardens, and wooden buildings.

Quite a number of these towns are pictured among the

<sup>1</sup> Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième campagne de Sargon*, 1912.



sculptures from Sargon's palace at Khorsabad, now in the Louvre.<sup>1</sup> The designs of these towns, certainly, are conventional, but show some individual features. One, Fig. 2, without inscription, Botta 77, represents a strong fortress on a mound, leaning against a high rock: this way the Assyrians might have pictured Persepolis. The interior wall, to make

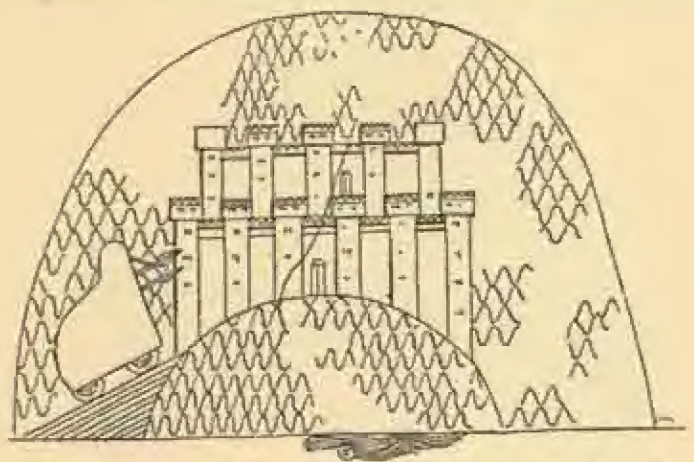


FIG. 2. Assyrian representation of a north-western Iranian town.

it clear, is raised completely above the outer one, whereas actually surely only part of it towered above. Each wall has but one gate. The towers, provided with loop-holes and battlements, command the curtain-wall by one story.

The town Kišesim, Fig. 3, stands on a flat eminence and has three walls, besides a fortified suburb and some tower-like houses outside: The town seems to have been one of the strongest; it was conquered by the Medes under Khshathrita

<sup>1</sup> *Lc.*, l. 179, *Annals*, l. 111: 'À l'entrée ina nîrib "Zaranda"; simil. l. 184; *Aniāltania* at the frontier of Sangibuti; l. 189 *Tarwakisa*, &c.; ll. 180 ff. *Ulhu*; ll. 233 ff. *Sangibuti*, cf. l. 261, ll. 269 ff. *Amarili*. Sculptures: Botta et Flandrin, *Monument de Ninive*, pl. 55, salle II, town Harhâr; 61 Kindau; 63 Sikrakka; 68 and 68 bis Kišesim, 70 Ganguhutu and a town without name; 76 Bit-Bagaya; 77 no name; 141 Mušasir; 145 name doubtful; 147 Kišišlu; 49 no name.

in the beginning of Esarhaddon's reign. The tower-like houses we shall find again in existing monuments. The design of Harhār, Fig. 4—the name recalls modern Khalkhāl—looks the most individual of all. The town stands over a quay at a river side; it has but one high wall with several arched gates, the main gate with a decorative archivolt. Inside the town is a hill on which houses are shown, among

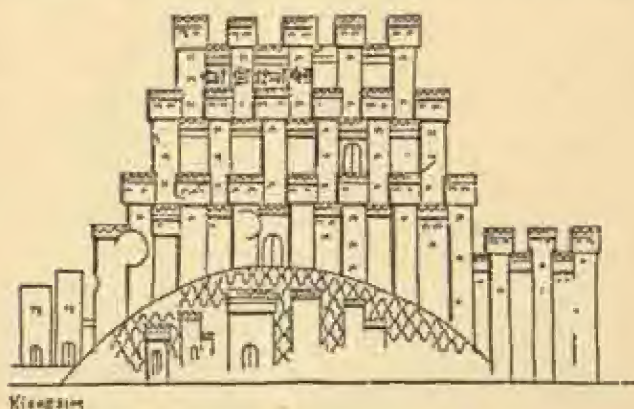


FIG. 3. Assyrian representation of Kitesim.

them a larger building with decorative pilasters on the wall, indicating a mixed technique of stone and sun-dried bricks. And on the slope of the hill, on a terrace of squared stones, resembling the terrace of Pasargadae, stands a kind of palace with three doors with gabled lintels.

Far more information is given by the picture of Muşasir, Fig. 5, together with the descriptive text. On both sides there are three-storied, tower-like houses, crowded together in the narrow town; in the middle the temple of Khaldia. The stele of Kelishin records its being founded by the Urartacan king Sarduri I, and his son and co-regent Menuas, hence previous to 810 B.C. It was destroyed by Sargon in 714. It is erected like a Babylonian palace, on a high stylobate, and has a front of six pillars. The drawing does not make it clear whether those pillars were round or four-edged: the votive shields, some of them seen in front view, some in profile, look as if



hanging on a flat surface; but the two views, apparently, are intended only to make the objects perfectly understood. And small cornices at various heights of the pillars are best interpreted as metal rings, known to have been used to fasten the joints between the column drums. Remembering the frequent mention of wooden columns, the design means stone columns that replace—as in Persepolis—in a monumental

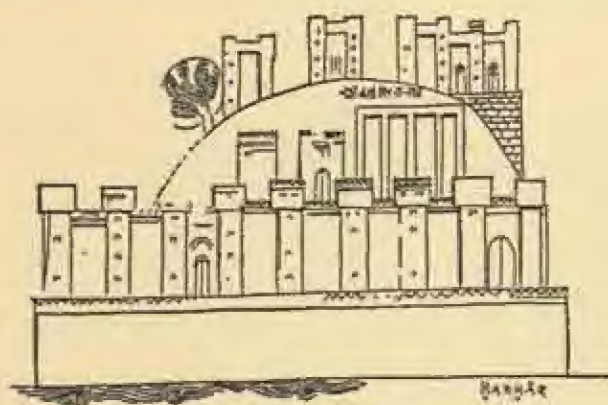


FIG. 4. Assyrian representation of Harhâr.

building the common columns of wood. The back wall of the portico has also cornices in two lines. Its door has a gable discharging the lintel. Over the columns stretches a large gable with a slope of  $22\frac{1}{2}$  degrees, steep in comparison with Greek gables, and steep means nearer to its origin. The tympanon is decorated with a network, indicating some ornamental design like the richer examples on Phrygian rock-tombs, e.g. that of King Midas. On the apex there is a large lance-blade, the symbol of Khaldia, as an akroterion. Votive lances, two enormous bronze basins on tripods, and a few statues complete this picture.<sup>1</sup> I have dwelt much on this description because this temple of Muşaşir is almost the exact picture of a Greek temple with all its essential details, long before there was anything like it in Greece. I want to

<sup>1</sup> In the inscription *kiuri* on tripods, ne. 'lids' *gannu*; cf. Hebr. כִּיּוּרִים and מִכְשָׁנִים, 1 Kings vii. 38, 43; all borrowed from a third language.



## 15 PRE-ACHAEMENIAN AND ACHAEMENIAN EPOCHS

draw attention also to the contrast between the profane buildings with flat roofs and the sacred one with a gable: the same distinction prevailed in Greece and Rome until the time when the deified Caesar was honoured by the Senate by having a gable put on his house. The only monumental example of a gable in Iran is the tomb of Cyrus.

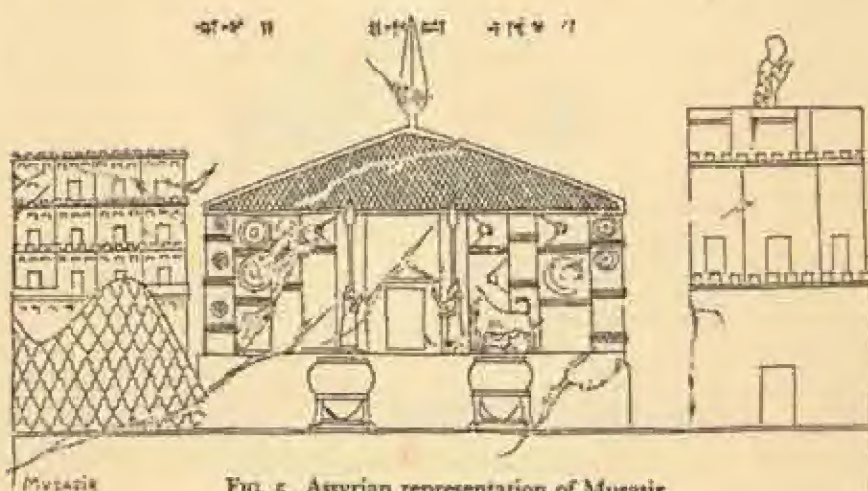


FIG. 5. Assyrian representation of Muṣaṣir.

Only twenty years before the destruction of Muṣaṣir, and sixty previous to the foundation of Agbatana in 678, Rusas I of Urartu rebuilt, in 735 B.C., his capital Van-Topraqqale, after its destruction by Tiglath-Pileser. When under Rusas II in 680-645 a new temple was erected there, the use of skilled workmen from Man illustrates the close connexion between the art of Urartu and that of the Ūrmiya region. Only a few excavations have been conducted in Topraqqale,<sup>1</sup> but considering that altogether only some weeks of work have been spent, the harvest, especially in bronzes, is amazingly rich; as

<sup>1</sup> 1879 Dr. R. Reynolds; 1880 Capt. Clayton and H. Rassam, *cp. Ashur and the Ld. of Nimrod*, 1897; Belck and Lehmann, *Z. Ethn.*, 1895, 1898, 1900; Lehmann-Haupt, *Abhdl. Gött. Ges. d. W.*, 1907; H. E. B. Lynch, *Armenia*, 1910, ii; Müller-Simonis, *Du Caucase au Golfe*; Marr-Orbeli, *Ark. Eksped.* 1916, *Peterb.* 1922; Herzfeld, 'Khatt. u. Khald. Bronzen', in *Janus*, I. 1, 1921, pp. 145 ff.

much as that of fifty years' work from Assyria. The main features of the architectural art of Urartu are: rock-cutting for fortification and for substructure of buildings and technical purposes like aqueducts, tunnels, stairs; buildings with huge square stone masonry; the use of stones of various colours, e.g. black and white, in alternating layers for walls; pavements in *opus sectile* of coloured material; a profusion of metal as the covering of wood, which presupposes much wood in the construction; finally the wealth of metallurgy in general and in almost every imaginable variety of technique. All this is naturally unknown to Babylonian architecture, as all the materials are lacking there. Even in Assyria the appearance of square stone is quite exceptional, probably always the result of foreign handicraft. On the other hand, every single feature corresponds to what we know of Media.

It is this urban culture, with its architecture and art industries, that the Medes adopted when founding Agbatana. To complete that image, we are allowed to add what we know of Van. As a matter of fact, some small Vannic bronzes have served, when reconstructing the palace of Persepolis, to explain some dark points in the construction of the roof, otherwise incomprehensible. That art is not the Assyrian one; on the contrary, as the picture of Muşasir symbolizes, it is much more Western, Anatolian, with relations to Greece that do not, however, indicate dependence.

The Median epoch is the darkest of Iranian history. The weak light that the time of the immigration receives from Assyria fails because the country is closed to the Assyrians from the moment of the foundation of the Median empire. Excavations have not yet been undertaken.

The Iranians never developed any historiography of their own, no more than the Indo-Aryans did, although they have always been an eminently historic people. The lack is deeply rooted in the character of the nation. They own a strong tendency towards abstract and metaphysical philosophy, which tackles great problems, but disregards and discards all empiricism, as shown by all their religious and philosophical



systems. Historical facts, in the same way, are not considered as important, and every historical tradition is immediately transformed into legend. But the legend becomes all the more a source of history. The oldest stratum is sheer mythology. But history causes the myths to be continuously recast and new legends to be added. The real events grow into the ancient models of mythical thought. Therefore the epics considered as history by the Iranians themselves not only are full of distorted historical details, but reflect in their various stages the sequence of the truly historical periods.

We may eliminate as prehistoric all that which is mere mythology and, hence, reappears in the Indian epics. The localities of these most ancient myths are not on earth, but are the heaven, the ocean, the mountain that encircles the universe. In the second stage, the period of the immigration, the old gods become heroes: more an anthropomorphosis of gods than an apotheosis of men. Also their places become projected on the Iranian earth. The acting figures are not individuals, but godlike personifications of peoples like the Babylonians, the Assyrians. The main feature is that the passionate struggle of that period becomes condensed into the opposition that dominates the entire Iranian epic: the hereditary enmity between the Iranian immigrants and the aborigines. In one of its oldest apparitions, Ctesias' tale of Parsondas,<sup>1</sup> the enemies who swear to their dying leader eternal enmity towards the Iranians are called Cadusii, the aboriginal inhabitants of Gīlān on the Caspian Sea. After the true events were forgotten, the enemies became a mere negation: the non-Iranians, Anērān; but only when, shortly before Christ, Ērānvēj, their old home, was no longer inhabited by Iranians, but by tribes of mostly Turkish and Mongol extraction; and when, under the Sasanians, an interminable period of wars began, the old opposition was transformed into the dualism of Iran and Turan. There have never been such Turanians.

The third stratum of the legend is that of the *Kavi*, the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *parsoant*—instead of *frasoant*—short form in -*vant* of *Frassraya*.



kings: no longer heroes, but a dynasty of kings in four generations, with titles and proper names, about some of whom the legend has nothing to tell. That indicates, in contrast to the older stages, faint historical remembrances. Similarly the localities are well-defined and real ones. Two of them reveal the land of that dynasty and at the same time the home of their legends. In the *Awesta* (I. V. 45) the second Kavi, *Usā*, prays to the goddess *Ardivi* to become 'the highest sovereignty';<sup>1</sup> the place is on mount *Erezifya*. That name means 'eagle-mountain' and is the region described by Sargon as *Arzabia*, stretching north of the Urmiya Lake from the district *Sangibuti* (i.e. Aw. *asayvati*, mod. *Sahand*, near Assy. *Tarwakisa*, mod. *Tawrīz*) in the east, to Assy. *Hundur*, mod. *Qutur*, in the west. The place of the legend, hence, is in Media.

The next topographic indication, of greater consequence, confirms that. In a chapter on the Varhrān, or great royal Fires, the Great Bundahishn calls the Fire of Agbatana-Hamadan '*kavātakān*', explaining the name as a memorial of the adoption of *Kavāt*—foundling and founder of the *kavi*-dynasty—by his mythical predecessor. As a matter of fact, *kavāt* means 'colt', *kavātak* 'foundling', and *kavātakān* may be an adjective of both, 'of the colt' or 'like a foundling'. The name of the second great Varhrān Fire in Media, that of Ganzaka-Cēz, is in analogy to it *ūdhur-gushnasṣ*, 'Fire of the stallion'. Colt and stallion are two of the ten animal incarnations of the god Varhrān, the Iranian Indra. It is clear that the legend has forgotten the king's true name and replaced it by the name of the Fire he founded, not vice versa. The legend further attaches to his story the old motive of his being a foundling, like Sargon of Akkad or Moses. The oriental mind claims a mystical, divine origin for the founder of a new empire or a new religion. The story cannot be told but *ex eventu* and implies that an historical person has disappeared into the mist of myth. The narrators of the story are no

<sup>1</sup> The abstract noun *xšadram*, used in related language for the normal nomen agentis *xšāyathya*.



better philologists than the daughter of Pharaoh (Exod. ii. 10): 'and she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water'. What they actually say is: 'His name shall be *kavāt* 'colt', for he has been abandoned to the fate of foundlings "*kavātakān*".<sup>1</sup> The institution of the Fire of Agbatana by the founder of the *kavi*-dynasty proves, beyond possible doubt, that for the legend the dynasty of the *kavi* was what the Greeks called the Deiocids, the Median dynasty.

Herodotus, whose account is the most explicit among the Greek tradition, calls the founder of the empire Deioces, his residence Agbatana. That has long been believed to be history. But this alleged history was irreconcilable with the indications in the Assyrian annals and in the inscriptions of Darius. Actually, Herodotus does not tell history at all, but a Median version of the *kavi* legend, as he heard it c. 450 in Sardis. The 'father of history' thought to improve the legend, which he took as history, by introducing the names of Deioces and Agbatana, combining what he had heard with what he knew from older Greek authors, like Hecataeus.

The real Daiaukku, governor of Mān in 715 B.C., had been deported by Sargon to Hamah in Syria, and could not be the founder of the empire. But only two years later the Assyrians call the region of Agbatana *bīt-Daiaukku*, house of Deioces; the exile had become the eponym of the Median family, as Achaemenes is that of the Persian kings. Herodotus, following Hecataeus, and not unlike the Assyrian custom, calls the founder by his family name, whom the Iranian legend only remembers under the name of the Fire he instituted. The Deiocids are the *kavi* of the Awesta, the Kayanids of Firdausi.

Only one Assyrian document of Esarhaddon has preserved the real name of the first king. In one of the *omina*, which the Assyrian king, frightened by the happenings in Media, demands from the sun-god,<sup>1</sup> a Median ruler appears whose name is *Wamitārši*, i.e. Med. *Vahmyataršah*, 'who knows how to recite the right sacrificial hymns'. Older texts always

<sup>1</sup> Knudtzon, *Gebete a. d. Sonne*, omen 2.



speak of a great number of Median chiefs, '*bēl-ālāni*', of different districts. This Wamitīarši is differently styled '*the bēl-āli of the Medes*'. The Iranian tribal constitution had three degrees: (1) the clan, *vis*, under a *vispatiš*; (2) the *zantuš*, tribe, under a *zantupatiš*; (3) the *dahyauš*, nation, under the *dahyupatiš*. The three degrees signify the people as well as their habitat. The plurality of *bēl-ālāni* means the lowest grade, chieftains of the many clans. The singular *bēl-āli* of the Medes means a higher grade. A new title is not used, because the increase of power has not yet been diplomatically acknowledged. Only after that recognition and their intermarriage do the Neo-Babylonians concede the royal title to the Medes. We learn from the *omina* of Esarhaddon that Kaštārīti-Khshathrita, a young chief of Kār-Kašši, was the instigator of a coalition, the success of which entirely depended upon the attitude of Wamitīarši. Several others entered the League. Wamitīarši also must have approved, for Kaštārīti appears as the leader of all the Medes and their allies. Wamitīarši is no longer mentioned, he may have been an aged man and not have taken part personally in the war that ensued. The Medes had formed an artillery and conquered one town after the other, among them Kišesim, the picture of which we have seen, and in addition the Assyrian fortifications against the Mannaeans. Accordingly the title '*the bēl-āli of the Medes*' in the singular signifies neither *vispatiš* nor *zantupatiš*, but the third grade, the *dahyupatiš*. Down to the Islamic period this remains the sovereign title. Wamitīarši, who had become the sovereign ruler of all the Medes, is the true founder of the empire, to whom the Iranian legend gives a name taken from the Fire he founded, while Herodotus calls him by his family name. Khshathrita probably became his successor. The date must be about the beginning of Esarhaddon's reign, in accordance with a statement in Herodotus, probably taken from Hecataeus, that it happened 128 years before Cyrus's victory over Astyages in 550, hence 678 B.C.

Herodotus' description of Agbatana (i. 89) is still more



legendary than his Deioces. The wording 'the Medes built for Deioces the city which we now call Agbatana' clearly shows that he introduced that name into the story he heard. Agbatana never looked like his description: seven round walls of increasing height, with battlements painted in white, black, purple, lapis-blue, orange, the last two plated with silver and gold. That resembles the description of the mythical castle Kangdiz, also with seven walls, not painted and plated, but really built of gold, silver, steel, bronze, iron, crystal, and lapis.<sup>1</sup> The number seven, the colours and metals of the planets, are Babylonian conceptions. The myth is the only reality; Herodotus interpreted it rationalistically, but wrongly, as the town Agbatana. A description of the real Agbatana is given by Polybius x. 27. 6.

It dates from the time of Antiochos III the Great, c. 209 B.C. Every detail is credible, none exaggerated. Agbatana had no walls at all, only the citadel was astonishingly strong. Below was the palace area, seven stadia in circumference, or little more than three-quarters of a mile, and smaller than Persepolis, of which the terrace alone measures more than 1 mile. The palaces had columns and roofs of cedar and cypresses—recalling Sargon's description of north-west Iranian towns—and the woodwork was covered with metal; the roofs had tiles of silver and gold. The modern golden domes of the Shi'ite mashhads in Iran and 'Irāq confirm this display of wealth, and it is proved to be true by the discovery of similar gold coverings at Persepolis. These were taken off and folded when Alexander's soldiers plundered the palace. In the same way Alexander and Seleucus I treated Agbatana. And still Antiochos coined 1½ million sterling worth of money out of the tiles of the Anahit temple. The exactness of the description is further supported by the fact that it would apply completely to Pasargadae, and that the original plan can still be recognized in modern Hamadan.

Polybius, therefore, is not describing a new town of the

<sup>1</sup> Or the castle of *kavi Usd*, on the high Alburz, with seven palaces, one of them built of gold, two of silver, two of steel, two of crystal.



Seleucid period, but what remained of the Median and Achaemenian town. It is 450 years after the foundation, not a long time for an oriental town. Amida-Diyarbakr still owns its intact fortification more than a thousand years old; the walls of Aleppo and Damascus mainly date from the crusades; Baghdad in the nineteenth century still possessed the walls of A.D. 1200.

Little has become known of ancient Agbatana, but the mounds are the largest in Iran. The modern town stands on them. From time to time important historical documents are found in Hamadan. Before 1923 two small tablets of silver and gold were discovered, *in situ*, in a poor private house. They were foundation documents, bearing the same inscription of Darius as the much larger gold and silver tablets, discovered in 1933 by the Oriental Institute's Persian Expedition, in the apadana of Darius at Persepolis. In Agbatana there had been one of the archives of the empire. In the book Ezra vi. 1-2, the Jews ask that Darius 'the king may order to search in the royal treasury'; and when 'they searched in the treasury there, where the books are deposited', 'they found in Ahmetha the castle' the document of Cyrus, with the permission to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the temple.

When publishing the Hamadan tablets in 1926 I prophesied the discovery of similar documents in Persepolis and of documents of the Median epoch in Hamadan. The last prediction also came true by the discovery—unfortunately without any scientific observation—of a gold foundation document with an inscription of Āryāramna, great-grandfather of Darius. It is so far the only document of the period. It must have been deposited originally in the foundation of a building in Fārs, for the inscription speaks of 'this here land Pārsa'. It must have been brought to Agbatana subsequently, hardly otherwise than as the trophy of a victory. Perhaps the tablet was deposited in the 'treasury there, where the books are kept'.

Against expectation, Āryāramna styles himself in his



inscription 'great king, king of kings, king over Pārsa'. The first two are Median titles, not due to the satrap of a province, a simple king. But it is significant that he avoids the real sovereign title 'king of the lands', Median *dahyupatiš*. It shows that the titles assumed are anticipatory ones, a claim to be realized. Two generations later, Cyrus had the same aspirations and built Pasargadae as a visible expression of this claim. Since his inscriptions call him 'king' or 'great king' only, the date must be older than his victory over the Medes, 550 B.C. Cyrus was successful; Āryāramna must have suffered failure. The discovery in Hamadan of his foundation tablet implies the destruction of his palace in Pārs.

The history of Pārs anterior to Cyrus is still darker than the Median history, so much so that not even the name which was originally applied to it has been generally understood. Some facts result from an analysis of the princely titles. The importance of these protocols as a critical instrument was recognized by H. Winckler and Max van Berchem, already fifty years ago, but the principle has never been applied to these problems. The smallest alteration in the protocols indicates some change in political status; nothing is arbitrary.

In his Babylonian cylinder, Cyrus II the Great, and his direct descendants, are always styled by himself and by Babylonian sources '(great) king of Anšan', but in the ninth year of Nabunaid Cyrus appears as 'king of Parsu'.<sup>1</sup> Āryāramna, younger brother of Cyrus I, calls himself 'king over Pārsa' and in Beh. § 1 Darius retains the old title 'of a satrap 'king in Pārsa', inserted, as in Āryāramna's protocol, after 'king of kings', and in this case before the Median sovereign title 'king of the lands'. Anšan, hence, appears exclusively in Neo-Babylonian protocols, there alternating with Parsu, the Akk. form of Pārsa.<sup>2</sup> In Old Babylonian, under Sargon

<sup>1</sup> *Jarru rabū šar An-ša-an*; Ur. n. 194: Cyrus and his father *šar An-ša-an*; Nabunaid Chron. *šar An-ša-an*; tabl. V. r. 64, a (a prayer to Marduk) *šar An-ša-an*. The variants lead to an original Anšan.

<sup>2</sup> The old Elamite title is *unkik Anšan Susunka*, king of two constituent lands of the empire, and can be traced back to c. 1400 B.C., but its

and NaramSin of Akkad, Anšan is the current name of a land; Gudea speaks of the '*ummān Anšan*'; Neo-Babylonian Anšan is a revival, in harmony with the general antiquarian tendencies of that period.

Now Asurbanipal mentions in two Assyrian documents recently come to light<sup>1</sup> one 'Cyrus king of Parsuwaš', in a story referring to the destruction of Elam, which can be dated between 642 and 639 B.C. Although early beyond any expectation, that king can be no other than Cyrus I. Frightened by the success of the Assyrians, he sends his eldest son<sup>2</sup> with presents to Nineveh; having a grown son in 639 he ought to have been born at the latest in 680, the son in 660, while Aršāma, Darius' grandfather, who belongs to the same generation, is still alive in 520. Asurbanipal mentions another prince beside Cyrus, viz. Pis/zlu/ame of Hud/kim/weri, 'whose land is far, beyond the remote side of Elam'. As Elam stretches along the Gulf as far as Rēshahr, this far land is to be sought south of Bushire, on the Lāristān coast.

NOTE.—It is mentioned only once more, in a letter of Bēlībni, Assyrian governor of 'Sealand' (Harper, letter 83), who informs Asurbanipal that his great enemy NabūBēlSumāte, king of BitYakin (Baṣra), ex-ally of Asurbanipal's hostile brother ŠamašSumUkin of Babylon, has sent his treasures into Elam and has himself escaped to Hudimeri. Bēlībni wants Phoenicians to build a fleet, no doubt to take up the pursuit (Schawe in *AOF*, viii. 52). In reading *Hukiwēri* one might think of Gr. *Ogyris*, a large island with wild palm-trees and a tumulus, the tomb of a king Erythras, eponym of the Erythraean Sea, on which Alexander's admirals Nearchos and Orthagoras reported (Strabo). The more probable reading *Hudimeri* might

linguistic form is archaic and proves it to be older, i.e. at least from the period of national restoration that followed the empire of Sumer and Akkad, since the end of the IIIrd dynasty of Ur.

<sup>1</sup> Weidner, *AOF*, vii. 1 ff., and Campbell Thompson and Mallowan, in *Lit. AA.* xx; cp. S. Smith in *JRAS.*, 1934, p. 575.

<sup>2</sup> His name *Ara.alku* is a hypocoristic in *-alku* of a name like *arastaka*, other short form *arant*. That is the name, in Iranian legend, of the mythical father of Vishtāspa-Hystaspes.



possibly represent a native *hulimezi*, mod. Hormuz, a name that sounds eminently Iranian, but cannot be derived from Ahuramazda, \**Apourga*—*Hormuza* in Alexander's time being much too old to allow such an etymology.<sup>1</sup>

The titles 'king of *Anšan*' worn by Cyrus I in the Babylonian cylinder, and 'king of *Parsuwaš*' in the new Assyrian tablets, necessarily are identical. The Assyrians simply go on using their own style of 200 years ago. But that this *Parsuwaš* is not simply identical with the old Median district is shown by the fact that never is a chieftain of that northern *Parsuwaš* called 'king'. The two titles of Cyrus I, *Āryāramna*'s and Darius' title 'king over, in *Pārsa*', Cyrus II as 'king of *Anšan*' or 'of *Parsu*' in the Nabunaid tablets, all mean the same southern land. According to the Nabunaid chronicle, Cyrus II, after the capture of Agbatana, carried off the treasures of Astyages to *Anšan*. That can only be to the treasury he built in his residence on the terrace of Pasargadae, mentioned still at the time of Alexander's conquest. Ctesias (Nicolaus of Damascus) is perfectly right in speaking of *Pasargadae* in the same story instead of Nabunaid's *Anšan*. The identity of *Anšan* and *Pārsa* is certain.

In the record of his eighth campaign, Sennacherib (704-681) tells that the lands *Parsuaš*, *Anzan*, *Pasim*, and *Ellipi*, and many Aramaic tribes supported the Babylonian cause. The mention, side by side, of *Parsuaš* and *Anzan*, has, from H. Winckler's time on, been interpreted as prohibiting the identification of *Anšan* and *Pārsa*: that is a false inference. It only prohibits the identification of *Parsuaš* and *Pārsa*, and contains an important date: c. 690 the *Pārsa*<sup>4</sup> were still in

<sup>1</sup> The phonetics of Elamite are totally different from those of the Semitic or Iranian languages: for the change of dental into lingual cp. *Ha(l)tamti* > Ass. *Adamtun* > mod. *Lamlin*; Ass. *Hulun* (Asurban. Ann. 58) but *Hudun-ai* l. 80; *Yasubi.gallai* (Sanh. prism., col. i. 64), but *Y.gaddu* tabl. K 1072. A local name, much the same, is that of the town Nas. *Kudnar*, founded by Soppiluliuma, *KUB.* i. 1, obv. 26, *Esgrh.* Ann. year 673 *Kul(l)am(m)eri*, Byz. τὸ χαλμαράρον κάρτερον, Arm. *k'limar*, *k'limar*, Syr. ܟܠܝܡܪ, Pers. *Kutanrān*, cp. *Paikuli Gloss.*, p. 174f. The name resembles Akk. *kudimeru* 'cardamom'.



the northern Parsuaš, not yet in the southern Anšan-Pārsa.<sup>1</sup> Derived from the northern land *Parsuaš*, the ethnical name *Pārsa* was given, after the migration, to the southern home, the disputed name of which until then was *Anšan*.

The date of migration must be earlier than supposed, not as a consequence of, but previous to, the destruction of Elam in c. 640. For not only was Cyrus I king of Parswaš (Anšan) in 639, but his father was king of Anšan (Pārsa) before him. The chief who led the tribe to the south was Teispes; the upper time-limit being the accession of Esarhaddon in 680. As the very last period of Elam is unknown, the prophecy of Jeremiah xlix. 34 ff., 'against Elam, in the beginning of the kingdom of Zedekiah, king in Juda' may possibly refer to the occupation of the land by the Persian tribe of the Hūvaža, to be dated in that case in 594 B.C.

Pasargadae was founded by Cyrus in 559-550. Its identity with the ruins of Mashhad i Murghāb, never really doubtful, has been confirmed by the inscriptions found in 1928,<sup>2</sup> which cannot belong to Artaxerxes II's brother, the hero of Xenophon's *Anabasis*, but only to the great king.

Pasargadae is situated 50 miles north of Persepolis, at the same altitude as Agbatana, 5,500 feet. Its buildings are scattered over a vast plain on all sides encircled by mountains. A terrace of beautifully dressed stones, 'Solomon's throne', enlarges the top of a natural hill, on which once stood the citadel. It dominates the palace area below, which was enclosed only by a park-wall. The uniform orientation of the palaces therein, some lines indicating walls and roads, some traces of canals, show that there was really a park around the buildings, a garden like those which Sargon describes, or like the 'hanging gardens' which Nebuchadnezzar made in Babylon for his Median consort. The park gate was a monumental building. The separation into *bīrūn* and

<sup>1</sup> The Iranian topographical name *parsuaš*, of which the reality is attested by Old Ind. *pārtad*, cp. *AMI*. i. 79, would become Med. \**parspa*-, OP. \**parša*-, of which derivation with *vaidhi* gives the ethnicon *pārsa*.

<sup>2</sup> Dissert. Pasargadae in *Klio*, 1907, 3 and *AMI*. i, Bericht.



*andarūn*, *sarai* and *haram*, is already indicated. The other buildings are: the tomb of Cyrus called 'of Solomon's mother'; a tomb-tower of an unknown owner, called 'Solomon's prison'; and, c. 1 mile distant, a temple. For in spite of Herodotus' assertion that the Persians had no temples, they exist in Pasargadae as well as in Persepolis, and if Berossos the Babylonian, better informed than the Greek, says that Artaxerxes II had statues of Anahit erected in all the capitals of the empire, it means in temples, not in open spaces. No antique place, however large it might be, was a town if it had no temple. Still more distant are the remains of the city proper, not much more than a little village.

Such a plan cannot be called exactly a town. It looks more like the first settlement of nomads, and such in fact was the case. An analogy from a younger period is furnished by the Arabian Hatra in Mesopotamia, 1st century B.C.<sup>1</sup> We must imagine the plain of Pasargadae full of tents, under which still passed a good deal of the daily life. One can see it still, when the modern nomads pass through Pasargadae, and I had occasion to observe a significant example of the permanence of worship. The thousands upon thousands of flocks are thrice led around the tomb of Cyrus, the stones of which the nomads anoint.

Pasargadae was succeeded, only forty years later, by Persepolis. From the inscriptions, it took at least the years 518 to 460 B.C. to build it. As a whole it shows quite a different type: a very strong fortress, inside which are only the palaces. The substructure alone, up to 60 feet high, partly cut out of the rock, partly built of colossal blocks, made the place unassailable for the weapons of that time. On its east side, the terrace leans against the rock; the three other sides are free. A wall, almost 50 feet high, enclosed it on all its sides, climbing up the rock to a height of c. 300 feet. At its foot,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ross, *JRGS.* ix, 1839; Ainsworth, *JRGS.* ix, 1841; H. Layard, *Transact. R. Inst. Br. Archt.* vii, iv; *WV DOG.* ix, 1908 and xxi, 1912; Herzfeld, *ZDMG.* lxviii, 1914, pp. 655-76.



in the plain, a city extended, consisting apparently of royal buildings only, which, as a few traces together with a description of Kleitarchos show, was surrounded by a double wall and ditch. Before knowing how the ruins looked in the old time, the description of Kleitarchos, preserved in Diodoros, was believed to be fanciful. As a matter of fact, it is exact even in details of measurements, and must be that of an eyewitness, although it may not be of Kleitarchos himself.<sup>1</sup>

Pasargadae and Persepolis are not of the same type, because conditions had changed completely during that short period. When Cyrus built Pasargadae, he was still the satrap of a remote province of the powerful, but Asiatic, Median empire; when Darius founded Persepolis, he was the absolute sovereign of an empire that comprised the known world. Pasargadae is distinctly Iranian, Persepolis more cosmopolitan, not in its essentials, but in many details, mainly of decoration. An analogy from another sphere is the common use of the Aramaic language at that period.

The idea of raising a palace on so high a terrace is not merely a defensive one, but seems to come from Babylon, with some Urartaeon affinities at the same time. The Achaemenid kings had lived in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, which is raised still higher, on its brick platform, over the hot plain. In Babylonia there were good climatic reasons for it; in Iran it is scarcely necessary. The plan does not seem to have originated in Iran. The wish to have a fine view does not enter, for the terrace was completely enclosed by high walls; the purpose was only safety and display; even the much beloved gardens were sacrificed.

The individual buildings of Persepolis were originally complete units in themselves. In Pasargadae they stand isolated, as they should, in a park. They all are a house with one roof, the four outer walls of which look outward. In all the other old oriental countries the essential element of the house is the courtyard. A structure would be a house, if there

<sup>1</sup> Schnabel, *Berosos*, puts forward the view that Kleitarchos, incorrect in his description of Babylon, wrote only after 260 B.C.



were only four walls around a court, even without covered rooms. Various types are derived from such a prototype. A palace like that of Nebuchadnezzar is not an independent conception, but an addition of many houses of the usual type enlarged, giving the impression of a maze of courtyards. In Persepolis, the elements, originally of quite a different character, are connected by walls and secondary tracts of buildings to the same effect: a maze of little courts between walls. The independence of the houses is abandoned. Whereas in Babylonian and Assyrian architecture the court is the unit and its four sides are treated after one and the same design, in Persepolis every side of a court shows the walls, not uniformly treated, of such a building as by chance borders it. Evidently elements of native origin have been composed according to imported ideas. No attempts can be observed to solve the artistic problems arising from such a crossing, which might have led to new and promising developments. This is not an isolated observation, but one that can be made repeatedly: the Achaemenian art is not a creative one.

The house, which constitutes the unit of the composition of Persepolis, essentially consists of a portico between two closed rooms, and a vast hall behind. A number of small rooms around the hall are secondary and subject to variation, in accordance with the varying purposes of the buildings. The same house is represented already by a number of rock-tombs, which must be called Median in a wide acceptance of that name, and of which the so-called *Āukkān i Dāūd*, 'David's shop', near Sarpul, may serve as an example. High above a vertical wall of rock, artificially smoothed, is a large and deep portico, hewn out of the rock. Of its two columns the bases only and part of the capitals attached to the entablature remain, the shafts having given way under the weight of the impending rock. An entablature imitating woodwork frames the horizontal and also the two vertical sides of the opening. In the middle of the back wall a door leads into the spacious tomb-chamber, in which there is one place for burial cut out of the rock, like a bench. Below, on



the vertical rock, is the sculpture of a man in Elamite dress, but with the Iranian bashlik as head-dress, and the *barsom*-wand in his hand, a clear token of Magian cult. A similar figure appears on several little gold plates from the Oxus treasure in the British Museum. The figures are Iranians.

Unknown until I made a survey of it in 1913 was the similar tomb at Sahna, between Kirmanshah and Hamadan. It is equally difficult of access, with almost the same portico, originally with two columns, less rich framework, but an entablature on the inner walls of the portico. Above the door, this tomb, too, has a mark of the religion to which it belongs: a winged sun-disk of a design more archaic than the refined shape in which it appears at Persepolis. The interior of the tomb is exceptionally complicated: an upper chamber with two sarcophagi, between which a well leads down to the main chamber, with only one very large loculus.

A third tomb, Fakhrîqa, south of the Urmiya Lake, and near the place of Mesta, main town of antique Man, strangely has an open tomb-chamber, a second pair of columns replacing the wall with the door. The columns are all preserved; the loculi were covered with heavy slabs. A fourth tomb, Utâq i Farhâd, on the way from Sarpul to Luristan, is described by H. Rawlinson as unfinished. Two more have recently been discovered by Major Edmonds and have been published by the Gertrude Bell Memorial.

These tombs are pre-Achaemenian. The burial-chamber replaces the main hall of the house, the portico is fully cut out of the rock, the walls right and left are scarcely indicated, to save labour. They give an abbreviated picture of the same type of house.

The royal tombs at Naqsh i Rostam are of essentially the same type. In comparison with the Median tombs they are much larger, much richer in detail and ornamentation, but relatively poorer in actual labour. The portico has no spacial depth, but is projected into one plane like a drawing, resulting in more effect with comparatively less work. That alone shows them to be younger. Darius and his successors



continued the Median type, which, again, is itself a continuation of Anatolian tombs, of which those in Paphlagonia are the nearest analogies.

But the transposition into a flat projection was not an innovation of the time of Darius. We find it already on an older tomb, unpublished, called *Dā u Dukhtar*, 'the Nurse and the Princess' (Pl. V). It is not far from the *Kurangūn* sculpture. The interior is a spacious rectangular chamber, above which, at a later period, a second one has been hollowed out. The chamber is empty and void of any kind of burial-place. The front reveals a stronger tendency towards decoration than the Median tombs, but less than the Achaemenian ones, e.g. the careful rendering of the battlements, so regular a feature in real architecture that it is only an omission where it is not figured. The outstanding peculiarity of this monument is its proto-Ionic columns, which would be enigmatical without the bas-relief of the *Muṣaṣir* temple from *Khursabad*. The date of the tomb is limited between 650 and 550; Greek influence is out of the question, as also in the case of *Muṣaṣir*.

Just the same shape of column is still quite alive in the rustic architecture of such regions as have hardly been influenced, till to-day, even by Muhammedan art—out-of-the-way valleys in the *Alburz*, in *Kurdistan*, and in *Luristan*. The capitals shown in Fig. 6, all of them resembling the Ionic style, descend neither from Old Greek nor from Hellenistic prototypes, but from such as appear on the *Dā u Dukhtar* tomb, and which we must assume in order to explain the common origin of the Eastern and Western specimens. Wherever those columns appear, there is also the Old Median house.

The two mosques, at the same time rest-houses for travellers, from the *Sulaimāniyya* region, Fig. 7, do not differ in any essential point from the Persepolitan house, which is nothing but the transformation of the same rustic dwelling into high architecture. The subjects of the kings that lived in palaces like those of *Persepolis* lived in the same simple

structures as the Kurds of Sulaimāniyya. Besides the one from near Arbela, one example from Portuk Han, on the road from Inner Anatolia to Cilicia, shows that the Old Persian house was not confined to Iran. It was common over all the mountainous regions, from the south-west of Iran as

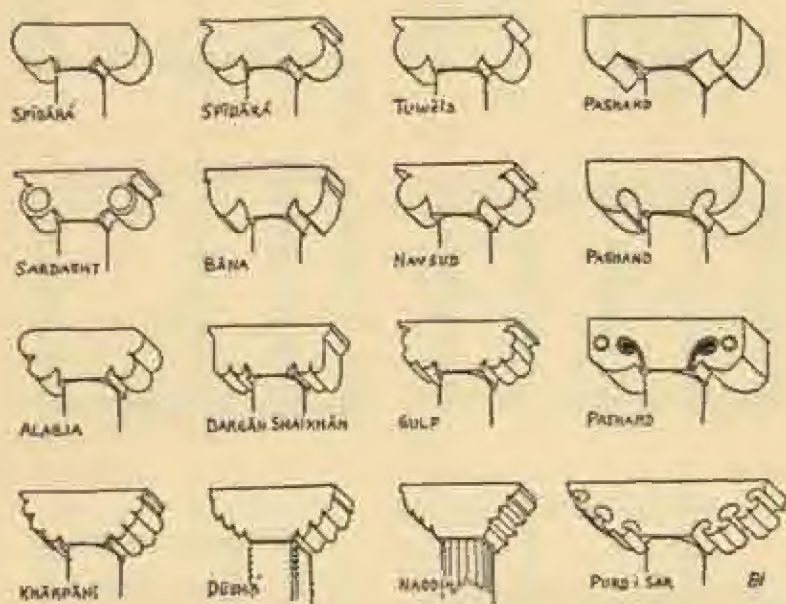


FIG. 6. Wood capitals from rustic buildings.

far as the Balkans. One cannot yet say whether it has been proper to an individual population, or has served a special purpose, e.g. temple in opposition to dwelling-place, for it is not the only type known of that period.

The tomb of Cyrus, too, reproduces a house. The tomb-chamber itself is the most abstract idea of a primitive dwelling: four walls with a gable roof. Still more than the type already discussed, this one is not oriental, indeed it would not be surprising to meet it somewhere in Europe. The cornices and the door-lintel in shape of a bent-up plank, as is the custom in Lycia, indicate an original wood-structure. A primitive type, no longer used as a house, is preserved as



a tomb. Of this type may have been the huts of the Iranians before their immigration.

To raise such an obsolete house on a substructure of six steps is a Babylonian thought: the Babylonian ziggurats are

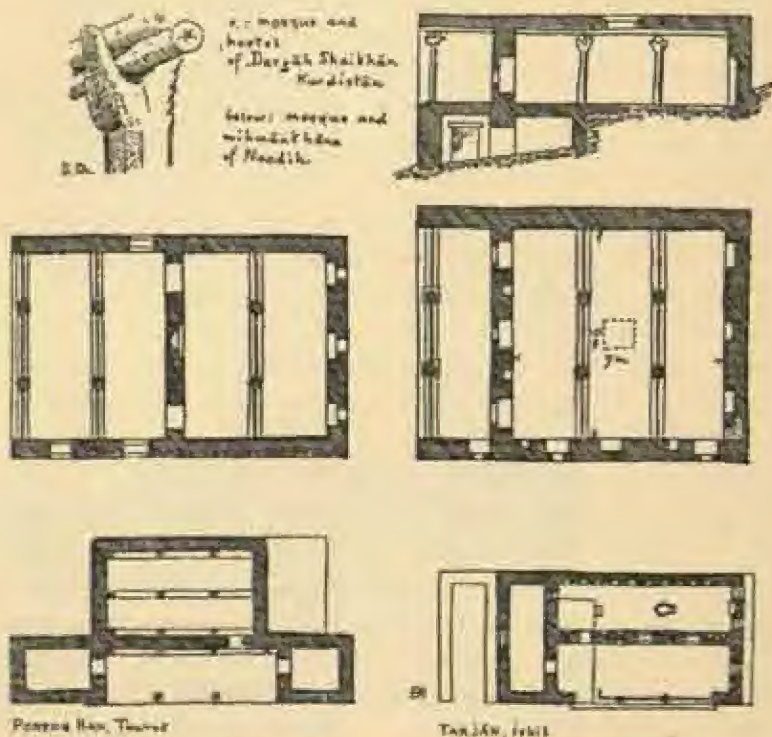


FIG. 7. Modern village mosques and rest-houses.

crowned by a small temple. The proportions are changed, the idea is the same. The six steps under the tomb transform the profane hut into a sacred building. Therefore the arrangement of the seven steps reappears in the temple of Pasargadae. The graduated terraces exist; the design of the small flights of steps is only probable; the small house on the summit is an assumption in analogy to the neighbouring tomb of Cyrus. The similarity of the whole justifies the assumption of analogy in the detail.

Two tombs, constructed in huge square stones, the 'prison

of Solomon' in Pasargadae and the Ka'aba of Zardusht at Naqsh i Rostam, represent a third house with the shape of a tower. Several observations indicate that a living type of house has only superficially been adapted to a tomb. The cutting of the joints does not correspond to the structural parts of the building. It is just the picture of a house carried out in a foreign material. The level of the threshold of the door cuts through the middle of the lower row of windows on the other sides. The interior is solid up to half the height of the tower, the upper part is one high chamber, both interior parts in contradiction to the three stories of rooms which the windows of the three sides indicate. Those sides reproduce the true appearance of the prototype: corner-posts of wood or stone, walls of clay between them, decorated with small rectangles regularly disposed, in the spirit of the rhombic network on the gable of the Muşasir temple, and of richer designs on the Phrygian tombs; three windows in three stories with twofold frames of boards; under the roof a dentil, produced by showing the outer end of the beams that form the ceiling. This is the house that is often represented as that of north-west Media in Assyrian sculptures.

It spread over Armenia, for Xenophon mentions the tribe of the Mossynoikoi, the 'tower-dwellers'. The British Museum owns some bronzes from Van, Fig. 8, that are more true to the Ka'aba i Zardusht than even the Assyrian sculptures. Here the door-lintel is replaced by a parabolic arch, and the flat roof has the normal battlements. It was this piece that helped us to solve a problematic point in the construction of the roofs in Persepolis. The other little Vannic bronze of a small tower shows the same. The timber-work of the roof projects before the plane of the wall and supports the battlements. The ornament on that corbelled entablature is replaced in Persepolis by a rich frieze of enamelled bricks in the Susian fashion. The parabolic arch is used in Persepolitan architecture only for narrow openings or passages in sun-dried brick masonry, not openly visible. In Assur that arch is not attested, while it was known



from Boghazkoi, and is common in Armenia. If it has been found recently on Sargon's aqueduct at Khursabad, it is there, like the whole architectural idea, apparently of Urartacan origin, a foreign work.

These Iranian tombs raise two historical problems: (1) to whom do they belong? and (2) how is it that we find tombs

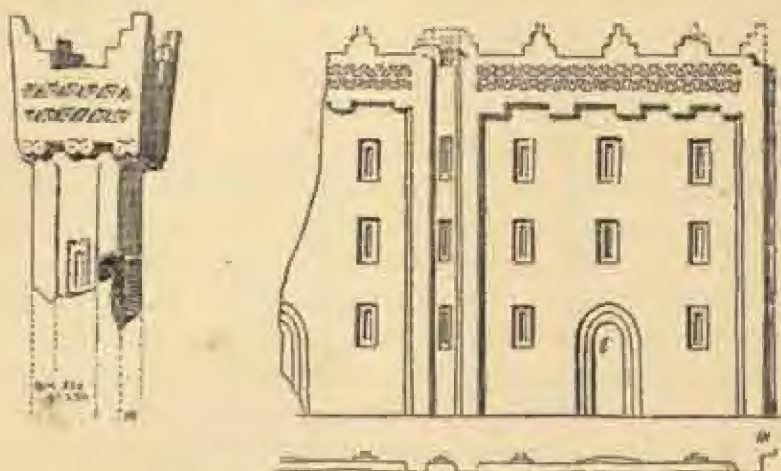


FIG. 8. Bronzes from Van, British Museum.

at all, when the later Zoroastrians do not bury, but expose, the bodies? The second question leads to the greater problem of Old Iranian religion.

The attribution of the seven royal tombs to the seven Hystaspids is simple: the four first kings are buried at Naqsh i Rostam, the three last at Persepolis. Equally certain is the tomb of Pasargadae that of Cyrus. Between them there ought to be the tomb of Cambyses. Against other theories, I maintain positively that according to the Behistun inscription the unfortunate king died by suicide, in or near Agbatana. He was succeeded by the usurper Gaumāta, the magus, who certainly did not build him a monumental tomb. But near Persepolis there is a royal tomb, never finished, which exactly imitates the steps of the tomb of Cyrus. I take it for granted that this incomplete tomb is that of Cambyses. Then we know the burial-places of all the Achaemenids.

To whom the two identical towers belong, and the rock-tomb of Dā u Dukhtar, is difficult to ascertain; possibly to the three predecessors of Cyrus II: Cambyses I, Cyrus I, and Teispes. Against each identification there are objections. Of the identical towers, the one at Pasargadae cannot be separated from Cyrus's time, hence it might be the tomb of his father, Cambyses I, dead in 559 B.C. His grandfather, Cyrus I, born before 680, died at the latest about 600, rather early a date for the tower of Naqsh i Rostam to be his tomb. The tower stands in front of the tomb of Darius, inside the high wall, which enclosed the sacred area. It must be contemporary or older, and it is a royal building. From Ctesias we learn that Darius' father Vishtāspa lost his life when visiting the tomb of Darius; so the tower might be his tomb. But there is a possibility that the popular tradition, which calls it 'Ka'aba of Zardusht', contains a grain of truth. The interior arrangement, which is the same as in Pasargadae and different from the rock-tombs, speaks rather against Vishtāspa and Zarathustra. Only the discovery of a document might give certainty. There was none in the unfinished tomb of Cambyses.

Near Persepolis a considerable number of tombs have been discovered of simple private people (Pl. V), some cut into a vertical rock, like the royal tombs, or in isolated boulders, others hollowed into the horizontal rock, always closed by huge slabs. The documentary evidence that real burial was the general custom is of great consequence not only for questions of religious history but for practical problems of the Parsis of to-day. There has been a tendency to explain the difference between general exposure and the burial of the kings, either by regarding their tombs as an exception conceded to the kings—very unlikely, as the tombs are for the whole family, and as it would betray a kind of shame—or by questioning the Zoroastrianism of the kings. The evidence of real burials of private people at the same period cannot be denied, and, on the contrary, refutes the main counter-argument, that a change of burial customs, while



religion remained unaltered, was improbable.<sup>1</sup> But the assumption, also, that the religion remained stable is not valid. The tombs are of two types: the Median and the tombs of the Hystaspids with a kind of sarcophagus or loculus cut out of the rock, covered by enormous stones; and the tomb of Cyrus, the towers, and Dā u Dukhtar with empty chambers. We know the richness of the tomb of Cyrus from Aristobulos' description,<sup>2</sup> and must assume a similar, less rich inventory for all such empty chambers; whereas the tombs of the Darius-type presuppose no furniture and most probably no treasures at all. It is mentioned that the body was put into honey as a substitute for real embalming. This distinction reveals a fundamental change in religious conceptions between the times of Cyrus and of Darius, an observation never put into account.

The simple way of burial was continued. There are several tombs of the private Achaemenian type near Persepolis and Istakhr which must be attributed to the post-Achaemenian period. That the early Arsacids were buried is recorded by Isidorus of Charax in his *Parthian Stations*, written for Caius Caesar in 1 B.C. Their tombs were at Nisak, near Ashkabad, the oldest Arsacidan capital. They seem to have been recently discovered by a Russian expedition.

In the middle of the first century A.D. a female branch of the family, coming from Adharbaijan, succeeded the older one. Some of them were magi themselves, like Tiri-dates, of whose bigotry Tacitus and Pliny give humorous descriptions. Under his brother, Volagases I, the first attempt was made to fix the Avesta by writing. Evidently the ancient magi, at home in Adharbaijan, came into power,

<sup>1</sup> There was a change once: the later *ortothecae*, *astōdān*, are called *dayma*, root *dak-* 'to burn'. Burning, the greatest abomination to the Sasanian priests, must have been the very oldest form.

<sup>2</sup> The general Aristobulos was charged by Alexander to repair the damage done by robbers during his absence in India. In the tomb was a gold kline, with a gold sarcophagus on it, in which lay the body embalmed, a table of gold at its side.

and that is the time when the Magian custom of exposing the bodies became general. In Herodotus' time it was reserved to the magi, the priests.

From that time on we find *ostothecae*, small niches in the rock, in which the bones were placed after exposure of the bodies, in great numbers. They abound in Fârs as well as in Adharbaijan, some of them with short inscriptions in late Sasanian script. I know of only one older group, south of Behistun, not far from Harsin, at a place called Sakawand. One of them has a simple sculpture: a man in Old Persian dress—not Median—in adoration before a fire-altar, with the little figure of a priest on the right. The district can be identified with ancient Nisaya, which Alexander visited to see the famous horses. In Nisaya was the castle in which the magus Gaumâta lived, *Sikayahvatiš*. Modern *Sakawand* is the modern form of OP. *Sikayahvant-*, and we may attribute the *ostotheca* with the sculpture, which belongs to that period, to Gaumâta the magus.

The question of the mode of burial has always played a part in the problem of the religion of the Achaemenids, inasmuch as it was taken for granted, without any literary or monumental proof, that exposure of the dead was the Zarathustrian custom. Herodotus' qualification that the magi observed the rite ought to have been a warning. A second argument was derived from Herodotus' description (i. 131 ff.) of the religion of the Iranians in his time. To draw a conclusion from it as to the religion of the kings is a great mistake. Even if the account were contemporary with Darius and Xerxes, and if Herodotus had been in Persia, he would have been incapable of receiving any such information, which was as impossible to get in his time as it would be to-day. And Herodotus does not pretend to know, he only speaks of popular rites, and even with that restriction most of what he says can be proved by archaeological observation to be wrong.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is said in opposition to the old view, revived by Benveniste, and almost generally accepted.



The only source from which we may get sure information concerning the religion of the early Achaemenids is what they tell us themselves. In the inscriptions a striking difference has always been observed: Darius, Xerxes, Artaxerxes I in their prayers invoke Ahuramazda alone and no other god, just as the *gāthās* of Zarathustra strictly avoid mentioning the old dethroned gods like Mithra, Anahita, and Vrthragna. Not even in the inscription of Darius at Behistun, i.e. *bagastāna*, a time-honoured sanctuary of Mithra, the *bagā*, does his name appear. That is intentional. The two Artaxerxes, II and III, however, regularly invoke Mithra and Anahita together with Ahuramazda, and Artaxerxes II put up statues of Anahita in the capital towns of the empire. That the old Magian religion triumphed under Artaxerxes II is the surest fact we know of the history of the Mazdian religion. And that implies that a purer form of Zarathustrianism prevailed before.

The differences in the religious formulae used in the Akkadian inscriptions of Cyrus and the Old Persian ones of Darius can be explained in various ways, but not the difference in the character of the royal names. Cyrus and Cambyses are Old Iranian names of an ethnical kind, something like Latin *Britannicus*, *Germanicus*. The immediate forefathers of Darius, Vishtāspa, Arshāma, Āryāramna have common Old Iranian names without religious aspect. The Medes are called (1) Vahmyataršah 'who knows the right sacrificial hymns', typically Magian, non-Zarathustrian; (2) Xšaθrita, neutral, unless it could be connected with *xšaθriya*, epithet of ApamNapat-Vrthragna; (3) Cyaxares-*hvaṣtra*, a surname of Vrthragna and equivalent to later Vrhrān-Bahrām, typically non-Zarathustrian; (4) Astyages, i.e. *rštivaiga* 'thrower of lances', neutral.

After those names, either neutral or non-Zarathustrian, there suddenly appears, none of the innumerable Old Iranian names, but (1) Darius, full name *dāraya-vaḥumanah* 'who sustains the good thought', almost a quotation from the *gāthā* *Y.* 31. 7, and recalling the Bible quotations used as proper names by the early Puritans; (2) Xerxes, *xšayāršāh*



'who rules through right', and (3) Artaxerxes-*rtaxšātra* 'who gives sovereignty to *Rtam*', the Truth or Gr. *kosmos*, words which are used in a commentary to the main Zarathustrian prayer, the *Rtam-vahu*. The older names when at all religious were of a ritual character; these are ethical. The one thing we know for certain of the genuine religion of Zarathustra is that he tried to replace rites and cult by ethics. *Rtam*, *xšātram*, *vohumanah* are the most significant of his abstract creations; *ršah* belongs to *rštāt*, Justice, another Zarathustrian divine personification. Neither before nor after these three kings were names of that type invented. They are names adopted on ascending the throne, or, in the case of Xerxes, when he was designated successor. They mark their owners as Zarathustrians just as an Asur-ahē-iddin must be an Assyrian, Nabūkudurri-ušur a Babylonian, and al-Mahdī, al-Mutawakkil 'alā'llāh a Muhammedan. But they reveal still more: these three kings were the only Zarathustrians.

The monument that decides the question of the religion of the Achaemenids is the inscription *b* on the tomb of Darius, which has remained practically unknown. It took me a year to read and decipher it, as far as it still exists. The king calls it his testament, *handungām-andarz*. The whole juridical and ethical contents, the whole composition in strict antitheses of good and evil, are Zarathustrian. The second paragraph begins: 'I have loved righteousness, I have hated iniquity.' Those are the words of Ps. xlv. 8, which Lord Curzon quoted when leaving India, and which were the last words of Pope Gregory VII: 'dilexi iustitiam, odi iniquitatem; propterea morior in exilio'.

Moreover, the inscription contains two passages that establish the religion of the king beyond contest.

First: In the beginning it says that Ahuramazda invests the king with *xratuš* and *ārvastam*. *xratuš*,<sup>1</sup> 'wisdom', is at the same time will-power—one could translate 'power of wisdom'; *ārvastam* is at the same time the absolute ethical quality of 'being good' and 'reason', more with an ethical than a purely

<sup>1</sup> NP. *xirad*, etymologically Gr. *κράτος*.



intellectual meaning.<sup>1</sup> No modern language owns single words that cover the range of notions concentrated in these OP. philosophic expressions. They can be explained, but hardly be translated, on account, not only of the distance from us in time and space, but of the primary difference of conception: the dualism of good and evil that forces every notion under its law.

In the *Bundahishn* and the *Mēnōkhrat*, two religious books of late and post-Sasanian time, but based on older material, a philosophic system is preserved, which, in opposition to those of other sects like Zervanism, is considered to be Zarathustrian in a narrower meaning. In that system 'omnipotence' and 'absolute goodness' are the two fundamental qualities of Ahuramazda, his 'cosmic vestment', and form together the 'Mazdian religion, *dainā*'. It is therefore by the omnipotence of his god, in the inscription, that the king is invested with 'power of wisdom', by his goodness with the quality of being good. This alone is a *confessio*: with that investiture the king owns the *dainā māzdayasniš*, the religion of Zarathustra. The same idea is revealed by his name as king: 'the one who sustains the Vahumanah'.

To those two 'fundamental powers' of the soul are added, in other passages of the inscription, the three 'primary qualities': (1) *uši*, originally 'sense', then 'intellect, insight', (2) *framānā*, 'judgement, power of judging', and (3) *rvāθā*—the word from which *ārvastam* is a derivation—'bounty', more generally 'feeling', sometimes and perhaps originally used for 'love, mercy, grace'. Together with those two powers, these three qualities form a pentad; which corresponds to the psychological system preserved in Manichaeism and translated into many languages. The Iranian origin of it has been conjectured. In middle Median the correspondences are: *uši* = *ōš* 'thought or mind'; *framānā* = *framānag* 'judgement'; and *rvāθā* = *šmāra* (possibly an erroneous translation, being a synonym of *framānag*) 'bounty',

<sup>1</sup> More exactly it corresponds to Awest. *vohumanah*- 'good thought'. Gr. *τὸ νοεῖν* as well as *νοῦς* come near to it.



feeling'.<sup>1</sup> The appearance in the inscription of all the five elements of that Manichæan pentad proves the origin of it to be really Zarathustrian. There is no bridge that leads from Darius to Mani but Zarathustra. Mani inherited from him, Darius proclaims his teachings directly.

Second: One passage of the inscription runs—in a somewhat abridged translation: 'If it appears to my reason and judgement [dubious, hidden, or similar] whether I shall regard a man as enemy or as friend, then, I think, before reason and judgement first [comes] mercy, and although I ought to consider him as enemy, [I act] as if I did regard him as friend.' This remarkable sentence, part of which resembles 1 Cor. xii. 13: 'love is the greatest among them', is so closely connected with a dark passage in Zarathustra's *gāthā ushtavatī* Y. 44. 11–12, that it explains the *gāthā*: 'I am chosen as the first to proclaim Thy religion, Mazdā. Like a hostile spy I am observing in spirit all antagonists. [Doubting] who among those to be judged is follower of the good, who of the evil; whether the one is the enemy or that other, [I act] as if the one who can be considered as enemy, were not an enemy.' Zarathustra feels himself as the religious judge before God; Darius as the earthly judge, the *framātar*-. The passage in the inscription is not a literal quotation, but could never have been written without knowledge of the gathic verse.

Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes were Zarathustrians, and the only true ones. This is an additional proof of the fact that Vishtāspa, the protector of Zarathustra in the Avesta, and Vishtāspa, the father of Darius in the inscriptions, are the same person. Zarathustra lived at the time of Cyrus and Cambyses, and his struggle against the Magian religion was one against the magus Gaumāta. Only on the strength of this evidence can we enter into the concealed meaning of the Zarathustrian writings and bring out all the historical material which is hidden in the Avesta and the Iranian epics. It was all incomprehensible, uninteresting, absurd. Now it receives value, interest, and sense.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Burkitt, *Religion of the Manichees*, p. 33.



## LECTURE II

### THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

**P**ERSEPOLIS ended in flames, and these flames were a symbol. Perhaps they were intended to be, at any rate they have been, a sign to the world of the beginning of a new epoch. There is no deeper caesura in the 5,000 years of history of the Ancient East than the period of Alexander, and there is no archaeological object produced after this time that does not bear its stamp. The change was not the effect of a sudden conquest, but the natural result of preceding developments. The Ancient East was dead, the conflagration of Persepolis its funeral pyre.

At the foot of the terrace a temple was built shortly after the fire, not a Greek temple, but of the old gods. And yet, in the votive inscriptions, whether from statues or from altars, which are written not in Old or Middle Persian but in Greek, their names are Zeus Megistos instead of Hormizd, Apollo and Helios for Mithra, Artemis and Queen Athena for *Anāhit bānōk-nām* 'whose name is Lady'. Heretofore, no such syncretism in Mazdayasnian religion has been known so early, the first example being the gigantic funeral monument of Antiochos of Kommagene, about 30 B.C.; on the contrary it was common in Mithraism, which was propagated by the Roman legions, over the whole of Europe, especially to the Rhine and Britain. It is strange to think how a whole world, which looked back on two millennia and a half of tradition, could seemingly throw off, in a few years' time, its own nature and slip on a foreign one. The effect sets in much more suddenly than the modern Europeanization of the East, with which it has been often and rightly compared. In antiquity, as to-day, the process must have been a conscious one, and comprehends the avowal, unconditional and unrestricted, of defeat and inferiority. But to give up is easy, to

take over is difficult. How deep did this movement go? Was it more than the donning of cast-off clothes?

The period has left but a few monuments. Only three miles from the royal terrace of Persepolis stand the ruins of a town which succeeded and possibly already preceded it: *Istakhr*. When, in 316 B.C., a Greek author speaks of Persepolis, it is no longer the burnt castle of the kings but the new town *Istakhr* that he means. The two names, too, are homologous.

Before Alexander, the place and name of Persepolis remained unknown to the Greeks. Not even Ctesias, the physician of the queen-mother, Parysatis, and of Artaxerxes II, had ever seen Persepolis, though he lived twenty years at the court. The name only appears in Kleitarchos, who belongs to the romantic group of tradition about Alexander.

'The town of the Persians' would be *Persopolis*; *Persepolis*, used by Aischylos, means 'town-destroying', and is but a romantic designation alluding to the *Iliou persis*, the destruction of Troy, and to the burning of Persepolis. The true name is only found in the Babylonian Berossos, with the general, afterwards king, Ptolemy in his history of Alexander, and on the main gate of Persepolis: *Pārsa*. Both names, *Pārsa* and *Stakhra*, are elliptic. To *Pārsa* ought to be supplied '*staxra*', '*Pārsa-staxra*' (as written on some Frātadāra coins),<sup>1</sup> 'the stronghold of the province of Pārs'; and when only that province was left, its name was omitted as self-understood, and *Stakhra* alone remained as the name of the town that succeeded Persepolis.

Apart from its being mentioned at the occasion of Alexander's conquest, there is only one more reference to Persepolis, at the time of Antigonos, in 316 B.C. During the struggle between the diadochi Eumenes and Antigonos,<sup>2</sup> it was the scene of a brilliant fête in an immense camp of tents given by the Greek satrap Peukestes in honour of

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviated PR—BR, the first for *pārsa*, the second for the Aram. ideogr. *bīrthā* 'stronghold, castle'.

<sup>2</sup> Diodor. xix. 21 ff. and 46.



Eumenes, and described by an eyewitness, Hieronymos of Kardia. The camp would not have been necessary, if Persepolis was not burnt; for the great *apadāna* alone could easily have held 6,000 persons. When, shortly afterwards, Eumenes had perished in the fight with Antigonos near Isfahan, Antigonos visited Persepolis, where he was hailed as 'king of Asia', and reorganized the Asiatic satrapies, a partition known as that of Persepolis. Peukestes was deposed, Thespias, the leader of the national party, which supported him, was executed, and one Asklepiodoros was appointed satrap of Pars. Thespias is no Iranian name, and surely stands for Teispes, which would be not only an Old Persian, but an Achaemenid, name. It is the last and only mention of Persepolis, which sinks back into oblivion, while the whole land becomes as unknown again as before Alexander, and as Anshan during the high antiquity. But this complete oblivion shows that, after Asklepiodoros, it was no longer ruled by Greek satraps.

Such an interpretation would be in accordance with the monuments and the coins. The temple of Persepolis is not the work of Greeks; it is entirely Iranian. But in view of its Greek inscriptions we must assign to it a date as near as possible to the time of Alexander himself; for the nearest analogy to the script of the votive stones is found in Alexander's own inscriptions at Ephesos. The date supports the theory that the national party came to power directly after Asklepiodoros, still before 300 B.C. This was the dynasty of the Frātadāra of Stakhr. One of them is represented in the temple. The place of the sculpture we should regard as very unusual: inside the jambs of a deep window, and practically invisible. But it is the tradition of Persepolis, where the sculptures are always in the thickness of the gates, and in the palace of Xerxes of the windows. It is a poor art, a relapse into primitive methods: only the surface with incised design, and a deeper ground-plane. The same style, c. 120 years later, is shown by a rock-sculpture of Mithradates at Behistun; hence it is the rule, not an exception. The attitude is



a speaking gesture: bowing in adoration, with *barsom*-wand in the right hand, before the invisible god. The dress is folded, yet it is not the sculptural drapery of Persepolis, but a very uncertain one. The artist no longer knew how to do either the old or the new style. The opposite stone shows not, as is the rule in Persepolis, the mirror-reflection of the same prince, but his better half, the queen. This is the first and only representation of a lady, strictly prohibited in Old Persian art, in spite of the dominant part they played in politics.

The history of these rulers is almost unknown, and only a rough outline can be abstracted from their coins. They resided in Istakhr, which was also their mint-town. Their coinage lasted from the time of the diadochi to the incorporation of Pārs, as a province, into the Arsacid empire under Mithradates I around 150 B.C. The first class comprises the coins of four, probably five, rulers, whom I am inclined to date somewhat earlier than Sir George Hill does: from 300 (instead of 250) to about 150 B.C. Their title *frātadāra* 'keeper of the Fire' is a purely religious one, to which they add *bagān* 'the divine' or 'the god'. At so early a period this predicate can scarcely imitate the apotheosis of Alexander, which even his Greek successors only followed hesitatingly. It is more consistent to regard it as indicating their Achaemenian descent. Aischylos calls the Achaemenids '*isotheos*', godlike, and some of their attributes express, though not so openly, the same idea already in the time of Darius.

Among the proper names of the Frātadāra, only one, Artaxšahr, is typically Achaemenid, while more such names appear among their successors.

Politically, the power of the old dynasty had been annihilated; they were reduced to a petty kingdom instead of a world-wide empire. But the continuity of daily life was never interrupted; all the traditions of thought, of art and industries simply went on. The same observation obtains for the religion and for every spiritual sphere. The language, having already reached the Middle Persian stage under



Artaxerxes I, remained the same, and likewise the script and the scribes. On the tomb of Darius I discovered in 1923 a previously unnoticed inscription in Aramaic characters, far too much damaged to be read coherently or to be restored. But some words like  $\text{חשאיית ורך}$  *xšāyašya vazrka* 'the great king' or  $\text{מחיה}$  *māhyā* 'in the month' are conclusive that it was Persian in Aramaic script. This fact settles the question—of consequence also for some problems in the Aramaic books of the Bible—as to the language and script in which the Achaemenian records were kept.

This could have been inferred from the cuneiform inscriptions. For example, in the inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes near Hamadan, in the protocol-formula 'one king of a multitude' OP. *parūnām* is erroneously rendered in the Akkad. version by *mahrū* 'fore, foremost', as if the text had *parvanām*. It is obvious that the Babylonian translator used an OP. text in Aramaic script, where OP. *parūnām* and *parvanām* are identical. The use of Aramaic as official script for the OP. language was an innovation of Darius, which was considered important enough to be recorded in the Behistun inscription. It was the beginning of that system of writing, inexactly called by us *pahlavī*, 'Parthian', which the Frātadāra of Pārs used, according to their coins, and which the Sasanians continued. Nowhere can we recognize a discontinuance of tradition. The less comprehensible becomes the radical change in the exterior appearance of art.

The town of *Istakhr* remained capital of the province, later of a district, down to the early Muhammedan epoch. The ruins are marked by a few high columns and pillars, remains of the first Muslim mosque, in the centre of the town. They are of Achaemenian workmanship, and stand there as they stood already in a pre-Muhammedan sanctuary, which became incorporated into the mosque. To use existing buildings and to re-use any ready material is a general rule in the first Muhammedan time. But in this case it was already the foregoing period that had re-used the old columns. And not only in the case of the mosque, but generally, the later and



poorer periods of Istakhr seem to have lived entirely upon the remnants of its old grandeur.

Another large building, which in the same way was re-used in early Muhammedan time, possessed still larger columns, but of a different type. The shafts are smooth, not fluted, and the bases and part of the shaft are of the same piece of stone. The bases are campaniform like the Achaemenian, but are decidedly not of Achaemenian workmanship. The rough treatment of the surface alone shows the difference. The former high polish and finish of the masonry has been abandoned. In India the same admirable technique disappeared with the works of Asoka. The capitals of these columns are intended to be Corinthian. The helices at the corners, indispensable and essential features of the type, are missing; still stranger, they have no covering plate, no abacus. The upper surface does not increase the supporting area as in the Greek order; the static function is that of an Old Persepolitan, not of a Greek, capital. The Persian art took over only what is most striking to the eye of a layman, the Greek acanthus, and inorganically applied it to a native column, to 'modernize' it, make it beautiful.

A number of half-columns also remain of the same building, which in their original composition were engaged into a wall, with a slightly projecting entablature above, and niches crowned by a conch-shell in the intercolumnia. The capitals of the engaged columns have acanthi similar to those of the large capitals, but one row only, and are bisected in the diagonal, so that the abacus should project as a triangle; but there is none, and to avoid the projecting of the unprotected acanthus-leaf it is flattened. This is absolutely untrue to Greek style. The columns carry nothing at all; the entablature runs over the whole wall in the same line without projecting over the columns. This again contradicts Greek structural laws. The entablature itself is a cross between a Greek cyma and a Persepolitan moulding. The architects want to accept everything that is new, but cannot free themselves from their traditional feeling for forms. Only the



most superficial features of foreign art are taken over; the essential ones are missed. It is the hat that is altered, not the mind below.

Istakhr, together with the ruins of Kangawar and Khurha, form a group which, although without inscriptions, is fixed chronologically by their characteristics: very large dimensions—Kangawar must have been exactly as large as the great sun-temple of Palmyra—and masonry in squared stone, a survival, though an inferior one, of Achaemenian technique. These qualities distinguish them sharply from the relatively small, burnt-brick buildings of the Parthian period in Babylonia and Assyria. This dissimilarity is due to differences less in local conditions than in period. The Iranian buildings are older than the Mesopotamian. There is no material from Iran for direct comparison. Only the ruins in eastern Persia, like the Kūh i Khwāja, belong to the Arsacidan period, and their very small dimensions and the use of clay as building-material form a still stronger contrast to the style of the western Iranian group.

Literary references, too, for Istakhr and Khurha are lacking; only Kangawar is mentioned, in the year 1 B.C., by Isidoros of Charax in his geographical work on Iran, written at the order of Augustus for Caius Caesar, who was preparing his renewal of Alexander's campaign to the East. The *Stationes Parthicae*, only remainder of that work, describe the great trunk-road from the Euphrates to the Indian frontier and speak of Kangawar as having a famous temple of Artemis, i.e. Anahit, that may well have been 200 years old at that time. An analysis of its strangely mixed architectural forms—Doric capitals with Corinthian abacus—points to such a date. In Syria, also, the more numerous monuments teach that Hellenism begins with hybrid formations, gradually replaced by a more classical style, which gains prevalence only at the beginning of the Roman empire, after the architectural styles have been fixed by canons like that of Vitruvius.

The valley of Khurha in Mahallāt is full of vineyards, and

the mounds of the temple (Pl. VI) are strewn with sherds of large *pithoi*, wine-jugs. The building has been a temple. Worked square stones lie around everywhere. The two columns, still standing, belong to the peribolos. The plan of the temple proper, inside that peribolos, could only be determined by excavating. We may conjecture that the temple was dedicated to Dionysos. There is no Iranian god so closely connected with vine-culture, and the ruins are Seleucid.

The columns look strange. The degenerate bases consist of two high plinths and a still higher torus, which exceeds in diameter the upper plinth. The type itself is already attested in pre-Achaemenian time, and the campaniform base of Persepolis was, in comparison, an innovation. The shafts were smooth. The capital, though Ionic, is bad Ionic: the aboriginal shape of proto-Ionic capitals, which we know from the tomb of Dā u Dukhtar, strongly breaking through the Greek form. As a whole, it is an erroneous interpretation of Greek architectural norms caused by old-accustomed practices.

The proportions of the columns are still more instructive. The height of genuine Greek Ionic columns is from eight to no more than ten diameters; the height of the Khurha columns is eleven. The aesthetic feeling, demanding such proportions, had grown from habituation to over-slim wooden columns. In the first chapter of his *House of Seleucus* Edwyn Bevan defines Greek nature and the idea of Hellenism as follows: 'The distinguishing characteristic which marks all the manifestations of the Greek mind, is his critical faculty. . . . The critical faculty, the reason,—in one light it appears as the sense of proportion; the sense of proportion in politics, "common sense", balance of judgment; the sense of proportion in art, which eliminates the redundant and keeps each detail in its due subordination to the whole.' Reason and proportion, in Greek, are expressed by a common word. When the Persians attempted to accept everything that was Greek, they did not grasp the reason



and proportion, but were satisfied with the semblance. The result is a hybrid art, if art it can be called, worthy to be studied only out of scientific and historical, not of aesthetic, interest.

To the complete surrender in the sphere of art, a curious way of morally compromising with the historical facts stands in correlation. Alexander himself had propagated the legend that he was not the son of Philip but of divine descent. In doing so he adopted an idea, possible in the Greek world, and necessary for a ruler of the universe, a founder of a dynasty, or a prophet, according to the oriental mind. Similarly, the Iranian legend had transferred the Moses-motive to Kavāt, founder of the Median empire. And even Tamerlane, in the inscription on his tomb in the Gôremîr at Samarkand, traces back his pedigree to Jingizkhân Jihāngushā, the 'world-conqueror', contrary to truth. This was done with the desire to secure for himself part of the divine origin, which Jingizkhân had appropriated by beginning his pedigree of nine generations with an imaginary ancestress Alongoa, whose son is born following a luminous apparition, and who in fact is none but a mongolized Olympias, mother of Alexander.<sup>1</sup>

The Iranian legend, too, does not let Alexander pass as the son of Philip, but of the last Darius, who entered into Persian tradition only through the romance of Alexander. The legend makes this Dārā marry and soon repudiate a daughter of Philip, in order to have the son born and educated at the court of his grandfather, and to conquer, later on, the empire of his father, which makes the fact less injurious to national vanity. At the same time, Alexander became the incarnation of Ahriman, the devil, and never is his name mentioned in literature, unless reviled with a long series of invectives, abuse, and curses.

To this psychologically remarkable attitude belongs another still stranger thought. When about A.D. 50 under Volagases I the first attempt was made to fix the Avesta in

<sup>1</sup> Herzfeld, 'Alongoa', in *Islam*, vi. 317 ff.

writing, and when Ardashir I, 224-40, and Shapur II, about the middle of the fourth century, took up and completed that work, people wondered how it came that there was not a single fragment of the supposed old book of the time of Vishtāspa and Zarathustra. The general belief was that there had been 12,000 chapters of such an Awesta, written on gold tablets or with gold ink on parchments. To explain the non-existence, the fiction arose that Alexander had burnt one copy, and carried away a second to Alexandria, to have it translated into Greek. The implication of that fiction is transparent. The library of Alexandria, symbol of Greek knowledge, became but the translation of a stolen book, and Shapur I only won back Iranian wisdom by his translations from Greek and other sources. Nallino<sup>1</sup> has been able to determine some books which actually were translated: late obscure treatises on astrology and agriculture. In religion and thought, the position is the same as in art: neither the masterpieces nor the essence of Greek literature became known to Arsacidan Persia.

The political history took such a course that exactly in the middle of the third century B.C. eastern Iran severed itself from the Seleucid empire. The Parthians, a Saka tribe, forerunners of the Saka migration of 130 B.C., after nomadizing first in the plains south-east of the Caspian Sea, invaded and conquered Parthava, modern Khurasan. From the little kingdom founded in that province, they received the political name Parthians, as which they became known to the Seleucid West and to the Roman Empire. It did not take them long to become Iranians and to expand their rule over the whole of Iran. At the beginning of the reign of Mithradates I, 171-138 B.C., the West was still Seleucid: Antiochos IV Epiphanes died in Isfahan in 164. But the decay of the Seleucid power, caused by Roman policy, enabled Mithradates, about 150, to conquer Media. Demetrios II Nikator tried to win it back, but failed and became captive of the Arsacid. From 140 B.C.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tracce di Opere Greche', &c., in *Vol. of Or. Stud. pres. to E. G. Brown*, 1922.



the occupation was final. From the scanty accounts we learn that, at Mithradates I's death, the kingdom stretched from the Indus to the Choaspes, the river of Susa.<sup>1</sup>

The immigration of the Saka about 130 B.C. caused violent convulsion, but Mithradates II, the Great, 123-87, restored order. It is he who settled the Saka in the far south-east, and who extended his power, in doing so, over vast parts of India. The date must have been in 111/10, from which time he assumed the title 'great king of kings': a conscious revival of the Achaemenian title. The Pahlavis not only had become Iranians, but felt themselves as the restorers of the old empire. Later, Artaban II boasted to the old Tiberius, as Tacitus says,<sup>2</sup> that he intended to reconquer all that Cyrus possessed and Alexander had taken.

There is a monument of Mithradates II worth studying for historical and archaeological reasons, in spite of its bad state of preservation, a sculpture at the foot of the rock of Behistun, below the monument of Darius (Pl. VII). Behistun, an old sanctuary of the *baga* Mithra, was chosen by Darius, because it was the place of a decisive victory; Mithradates may have chosen the same spot because he felt himself the successor of the Achaemenids.

Unfortunately, a long modern inscription has annihilated the greater part of the monument. One can still distinguish to the left two large draped figures, with remains of the Greek inscription above, the traces of another such figure to the right, and, adjoining, another picture of three small horsemen, also with a short Greek inscription. The last one is a younger sculpture, to which we shall revert.

For the effaced portions we have as a substitute the naïve drawing of M. Grelot, travelling-companion of the chevalier Chardin and of a Venetian envoy about 1673, published from the archives of S. Marco at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The drawing at least allows one to understand the

<sup>1</sup> Thus read for *Hydaspes* in Orosius, iv. 6; cp. *AMI.* iv. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Tacitus vi. 31; cp. *AMI.* iv. 74, 33.

<sup>3</sup> Silv. de Sacy in *Mém. sur les Monum. et Inscri. de Bisroutoun*, 1809, printed



composition of the picture, and, moreover, to restore the inscription. Like the epigraphs inscribed above some figures in Achaemenian monuments, it was simply an enumeration of four names and titles beside that of the king. As Mithradates is styled 'great king' only, the sculpture must be anterior to 111 B.C. when he assumed the title 'great king of kings'. The four dignitaries are named, from right to left, as they stand before the king: (1) Gotarzes, satrap of satraps. He is known from Babylonian documents as co-regent of Mithradates' last years and his successor, since Mithradates seems to have had no direct heir. Gotarzes was no Arsacid, but, as his name shows, a Hyrcanian. (2) The second name, completely missing, cannot be restored. As there was no title he must have been a hereditary prince, known without other qualification. (3) One Mithrates with the Greek honorific epithet *pepisteumenos* 'confidant' (presupposing MP. *ōstikān* or NP. *amīn al-saltāna*). From the unique name it becomes probable that he was an ancestor of the later house of Mihrān, princes of Raga. Finally (4) a Kophasates, without title. This name occurs only as Kōhzādh in an episode of Sistān origin, supplementarily inserted into the Shāhnāme, and till to-day localized at the ruins on the Kūh i Khwāja. Since Sistān was the fief of the Sūrēn family, Kophasates may be an early member of it. Though the identifications are only probable, at any rate the subject of the picture, continued in Sasanian art, is the homage of four feudal vassals to the great king. In this special case it means the investiture of the four feudal houses by Mithradates, a fact which is reflected still in Arabic tradition. Mithradates, the actual founder of the empire, must have created its feudal organization.

The artistic side of the picture can be elucidated by a Sasanian rock-sculpture near Firuzābad of the time of Ardashir I. The composition is almost the same, with the only difference that here the homage—in which the king  
1815, from Morelli, *Viaggiatori eruditi Veneziani*; cp. Herzfeld, *Thor e. Anen*, pp. 36 ff.



takes part—is paid to the god, and that a page with a fly-switch is standing behind the king. These insignificant changes do not alter the iconographic type.

The attitude of the hands is remarkable: the right hand raised, covered by the sleeve. I am at a loss to explain this gesture. We should expect the palms to be shown, for the meaning ought to be that of complete surrender or of being unarmed, and a veiled hand might easily carry some weapon. The gesture is old. In the tomb of Artaxerxes II it is the left hand, so improbable that I prefer to believe it to be only an expedient of the artist, as the figures are seen from the left.<sup>1</sup>

To show the figures in a file according to their rank and dignity is already an Achaemenian idea. There are no new thoughts in this work, only the drawing does not follow the conventions of the old sculptures. With all its defacement one thing is clear. Being a rock-sculpture, the monument ought to be eminently sculptural, but far from being the projection of round corporeality into a relief, it has only two planes: the ground is chiselled out, but the outlines thus produced, instead of being modelled, are simply engraved. Although a rock-sculpture, this work of a limited art follows pictorial principles.

The second sculpture, with the three horsemen, bears the name *Gotarses Geopothros* inscribed over the middle figure, in later characters. The rider is not Gotarzes I of the older sculpture of Mithradates, but Gotarzes II. His real history is recorded by Tacitus. He, too, without being Arsacid, was 'great king', from 40 to 41 and 43 to 51. From the legend of a few rare coins, it is known that he had been adopted by his maternal uncle Artaban II, who himself was Arsacid only through his mother, Atropatian by his father. Tacitus relates that, in A.D. 50, he defeated the rival king Meherdates, sent and supported by Rome, at mount Sambulos, Greek misrepresentation of Cambandus, the very old name of the Behistun district.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Ostrup, *Oriental. Höflichkeit*, 1929.

Geopothros, the family name, means Gēw's son, OP. *vaiva-puθra*, for which various synonyms appear in the Behistun inscription, the Elephantine Papyri, and the Awesta. Under Darius a member of the house is satrap of Arachosia, *Vivahana*, Pap. *Vaivadana*. The eponym is considered by the Aryan myth, without the slightest offence, to be the father of Yama, the first man and king; indeed an old lineage. The much younger chivalric legend has reversed the relationship. Gēw—*vaiva*—has become the son of Gōdarz, and Wēžan, the family name, or more exactly an abbreviation of the title of the heir to the throne, has become personified and is the hero of the finest love-romance in the *Shāhnāme*. But he appears, unexpectedly, also in a very pious book, viz. in the Acts of St. Thomas, which is intimately connected with a monument we shall soon learn to know.

The sculpture of Gotarzes II was made at the side of the portrait of his ancestor, Gotarzes I, as a memorial of the victory which, in the manner of later Sasanian art, is symbolized as a single combat of two horsemen, almost a tournament between the two kings. Gotarzes is crowned by a little Victory, and followed by a page on horseback; his antagonist, Meherdates, is run through with the lance, his horse is stumbling. So much is still discernible.

This picture, again, can be elucidated by comparison with one of the Sasanian versions of the same subject, e.g. the single combat of Ardashir I and Ardavan V near Firuzabad (Pl. XI). The Sasanian picture is even more a medieval tourney, with the horses in full armour, decorated all over with the coat-of-arms of the kings. The meaning is unmistakable: the victory of Ardashir over Ardavan.

There are no other Arsacid sculptures of any importance known in Iran, and, still more astonishing, no remains of buildings of the period. They may be safely guarded under the earth. But we cannot simply substitute the picture of the Arsacid towns of Babylonia and Assyria for the missing Iranian ones. They give us a general notion to be sure, but as far as we can see, in detail, the art of Iran and of Babylonia



took different directions during the Arsacidan as well as the Sasanian period.

Contemporary with the beginnings of the Arsacid empire in 250 B.C. the Seleucid satrapy of Bactria became independent, but under Greek not native rulers. Starting from the regions north of the Hindukush, the Graeco-Bactrian empire extended first towards the east, over Central Asia and the Kābul region, then over the north-western provinces of India and the Panjāb; later it became dispossessed of the northern parts, confined to its Indian dominions, and at last disintegrated and disappeared there during the first century B.C. This empire had not only Greek rulers, but a strong Greek population, from the colonies which Alexander and Seleucus had founded on a large scale; we hear of seventy cities with Greek colonies and Greek constitution. Cut off from the West by the Arsacid empire, the civilization and art of this land took a special turn. Its effect reached far over Asia, as shown by the numerous elements of Greek derivation in the Buddhist art of Gandhara and of Chinese Turkistan. And many Hellenistic archaisms in Sasanian art, which cannot be a loan from the contemporary arts of the Greek West, are also of Graeco-Bactrian descent. Such a group, detached from its origin and no longer partaking in the development going on at home, must preserve archaic characters.

But the monuments we know from Central Asia and Gandhara belong, without exception, to a period later by many centuries. Even the French mission, which has been working in Afghanistan for eleven years under hardly possible conditions, has not yet found any remains of the pre-Christian centuries.

Only one monument, though outside Graeco-Bactria proper, but very near to it, fits into that gap: the ruins of the Kūh i Khwāja in Sistān. They were discovered for science in 1916 by Sir Aurel Stein and described in his *Innermost Asia*. I was there in the winter of 1924/5 and did some excavating during the spring of 1929, the results of which are as yet unpublished.

The impressive table-hill in the lake is doubly holy (Pl. VII). The plateau, covered with tombs and other remains, is the realm of the *khwāja*, the lord; and on the slope stands a castle of *Rustam*. *Khawāja* means 'lord'; in the East it is used for 'Saint'; and refers to the prophet Muhammed in the form 'lord of the Last Judgement and the Resurrection'.<sup>1</sup> His name, I was told, was *Sarā*, son of *Ibrāhīm*, or *Sarā*, son of *Ishāq*, son of *Ibrāhīm*,<sup>2</sup> and that he lived long before *Rustam*, with whose castle he was in no way connected. The appellation belongs to those equations between names of the Iranian legend and of the Old Testament, which were in great favour in early Muhammedan times, e.g. *Persepolis* was called *takht i Jamshīd*, throne of *Jamshīd* (the first king) or *mal'ab Sulaimān*, the theatre, playground of *Solomon*.<sup>3</sup>

The matter would be worth closer investigation in connexion with the many lineages derived from figures of the Old Testament. Unable to pretend to be a *sayyid*, descendant of the prophet, people at least usurped the next noblest descent from *Abraham*. As especially in eastern Iran entire nations assumed such legendary pedigrees, many old travellers believed themselves to have discovered the lost tribes of *Israel* among the *Kurds*, *Afghans*, or *Baluchis*. If, for example, the *Brāhōis* of *Baluchistan*, from their language *Dravidian*, hence *Indian* aborigines, but according to *Longworth-Dames'* investigations mixed with *Kurdish* elements, pretend to come from *Aleppo*, that is not the memory of an old historical fact. *Aleppo*, *Halab*, is the place where *Abraham* used to milk—*halab*—his cows. In its citadel there stood, until it disappeared a few years ago, an old mosque of the time of *Nūr al-dīn*, predecessor of *Saladīn*, containing

<sup>1</sup> *khwāja ba'th wa nashr*.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly also *Sarās*; H. C. Yate, *Khurasan and Sistan*, p. 85, calls him *Sara Sa'ir*, direct descendant of *Abraham*.

<sup>3</sup> The connexion of *Persepolis* with *Solomon*, of *Pasargadae* with *Solomon's* mother, and of the *Median* tomb near *Sarpul* with *David* betrays a certain feeling for their actual chronological order.



some of the finest works of medieval Muhammedan art, called Makān Ibrāhīm, the resting-place of Abraham. The provenance from Aleppo and the descent from Abraham are synonymous, and Brāhōi is nothing but the Kurdish form of Ibrāhīmī, 'descendants of Ibrāhīm'.

Thus the prophet Ibrāhīm 'the friend of Allāh' has been assimilated to Zarathustra as Ibrāhīm Zardusht, because the two old 'prophets' are both contrasted with the new one, Muhammed. Although I can trace it only in books of the sixteenth century, it must, like all the others, be an equation of the early Muhammedan epoch. There is only one monument in all Iran that is connected with Zarathustra's name: the Ka'aba i Zardusht at Naqsh i Rostam. The sanctuary of Sarā i Ibrāhīm Zardusht we must understand as the second, as the still living cult of the place proves.

During the first fortnight after the Persian New Year, *nōrūz*, pilgrims visit the mount from far and wide, remain three nights and days and depart, nobody knows why. The mere date proves the pre-Muhammedan, the Mazdian origin of this old custom. The fortnight after *nōrūz* follows the last of the six Old Iranian seasons of two months, called *hamaspāōmaidaya* in the Avesta. As *spāōmāida* occurs in Darius' testament with the Bab. translation *madaktum*, military camp, the unexplained name of the season can at last be etymologized as 'mobilization' or 'muster of reserve-men'. In the Avestic writings that military term is glossed by an agricultural one: *arto. krōna*—referring to the various works to be performed in winter, to which belongs the threshing of the corn.

Beside the date, the locality proves the Mazdian origin. The Avesta, *Yt. xix*, says that there are 2,244 mountains in Iran, a strange mystic number:  $11 \times 12 \times 17$ ; but the only mountain that owns religious significance is Mount Ushidā, invoked numberless times as sacred. *Uši*, literally 'ears', means 'insight, reason', but as in all old Indo-European languages, cf. Lat. *aurei-aurora*, the words for 'ear' and 'aurora' are related, and Ushidā may as well signify 'the



mountain in the dawn' as 'the mountain of insight', almost 'of revelation'. On this hill is expected the appearance of the Sōshans, the 'lord of the Last Judgement', the Saviour of Mazdianism. Because of this holiness, *Yasht* xix gives a description, as of no other land, exact in the most insignificant details, of the Holy Land, where Mount Ushidā lies in the Lake Kansavya formed by the River Haitomant. The Kūh i Khwāja lies in the Hāmūn, the lake into which the Hilmand falls; the situation is unique, and the identification has already been established by Sir Aurel Stein in his first publication.

The Awestic Sōshans is Zarathustra's own son and regularly bears the epithet Vrthrajan, the victorious, *victorialis*. It is almost incredible that a Latin commentary to the Gospel of St. Matthew, the *Opus Imperfectum*, speaks of these matters, and I would not have known it, if P. Giuseppe Messina had not drawn my attention to it.<sup>1</sup> The *Opus Imperfectum*, commenting upon the story of the Three Magi, quotes an apocryphal 'Book of Seth', written not later than the fifth century, during the Sasanian epoch. It says that the Magi, owing to an old prophecy, awaited the apparition of the star that would indicate to them the birth of Christ. The story is one of the many interpretations of Zoroastrian prophecies which substitute the Messiah for the Sōshans. The Magi, from times immemorial, every year after the *messis tritura-toria*, the season of the threshing of the corn—that is, the fortnight after the *hamaspāθmaida* and *nōrūz*—climbed up a mountain in the Far East and waited there in silence until at last the star appeared, which showed them the way to Bethlehem. In a book of similar nature, the Cod. Germanicus in Munich, it is said that after their return they built a chapel there to St. Thomas. The mount is called *mons Victorialis*, and the town from which it is reached *Sodola*.

The legend is one of those about St. Thomas, the apostle of India. In the Acts of St. Thomas, the apostle landed in

<sup>1</sup> By letter, and 'Una presunta Profetia di Zoroastro' in *Biblica*, xiv, 1933, pp. 170 ff.



India, the kingdom of Gundopharr, at the port *Sandrōkh*, a slight clerical error for *Sindrōdh*, the 'river Sindh', hence modern Karachi, old Daibul. We, too, from Teheran, went to Kūh i Khwāja via Karachi. In the *Opus Imperfectum* the name *Sindrōdh* is further disfigured into *Sodola*, *Sodella*, very comprehensible when transcribing a Persian name through the medium of Syriac into Latin. It is evident that the *mons Victorialis* is not 'the victorious mountain' but 'the mountain of the victorious one', of the Sōshans Vrtirajan, the Mount Ushidā of the Awesta.

The expectation of the Sōshans, accordingly, is the reason long since forgotten for the pilgrimages of to-day, which are testified to by the *Opus Imperfectum* already in the fifth century. The khwāja Sarā i Ibrāhīm is the son of Ibrāhīm Zardusht, the victorious Sōshans, the khwāja of the Last Judgement and the Resurrection. Christ is expected in Palestine, the Mahdi in Samarra. The expectation of the Messiah is always that of the reappearance of a prophet at the place where the prophet lived. The 'Sealand' of the Awesta is the holy land not because the Sōshans is expected there, but because the prophet lived there. Zarathustra actually lived on this same mount. According to the Awesta he lived under the protection of 'king Vishtāspa'. The Sealand was, in Achaemenian time, part of the satrapy of Parthava under Darius' father Vishtāspa. The conclusion is compelling; on the Kūh i Khwāja, Vishtāspa, the father of Darius, gave a safe refuge to Zarathustra against the magus Gaumāta.

The ruins on its southern slope (Pl. VIII) are a second reason for making the mountain a sanctuary. Still about 1500 they were called *Kale i Rustam*, Rustam's castle; to-day *Kale i Kūk u Kōhzādh*.<sup>1</sup> Kūk and Kōhzādh are two antagonists of Rustam in a local legend, which has been inserted later on into the *Shāhnāme* of Firdausi. The name Kōhzādh seems to contain some historical memory. At the period of the Arsacids many historical facts, especially from the history

<sup>1</sup> The pronunciation of *dh* is between *dh* and *l*, hence *Kōhzāl*, *Kōh i Zal* is sometimes, but incorrectly, written in European books.



of the feudal houses of Iran, were introduced into the older forms of the epics. Kophasates is one of the four vassals on Mithradates' sculpture at Behistun. He may well be the historical prototype of the legendary Kōhzādh, and a member of the feudal house of Sistān, the Sūrēn.

Rustam, the main hero of the *Shāhnāme*, is not an Iranian, but king of Sakastan and a bad Zoroastrian. His legend is a rejuvenation of the old myth of Krsāspa, fragments of which have been preserved in the Avesta, this again being the Arachosian version of a much older myth of Indra Vrtrahan, the dragon-slayer and *victorialis*. In that very oldest shape of the myth, it was Vrthragna who, by his weapon, the *khwarnā*, lightning or thunderbolt, brings about the *frāšakrtiś*, the conflagration of the world, later on understood as resurrection.

During the Arsacid period Sistān belonged to the fiefs of the electoral house of Sūrēn Pahlav, the first after the royal house, who held the office of crowning the king. The best known of them was the Surenas who defeated Crassus at Carrhae. When Mithradates II (between 123 and 111 B.C.) first settled the Saka in the south-east of Iran, the Sūrēn must have been their feudal lords, themselves the vassals of the great kings. After having conquered north-west India, the Saka tended to make themselves independent, and when in the first century A.D. the sovereignty passed on from the old line of the Arsacids to the Atropatenian line, the Sūrēn, till then loyal followers of the old house, became antagonists of the new one. The only great ruler of their family during that period was Gundopharr, the founder of Kandahar, old Gundopharron, which perpetuates his name. He did away with his vassals, the Saka 'great kings', and united in his hand the vast dominions in Iran and India. Pliny says that the kingdom at that time equalled the Arsacidan one. He ruled it with satraps, from whom descended the *khshatrapa* dynasties of India, which continued long after the disappearance of that short-lived glory.

Gundopharr's reign is fixed by two dates: he ascended the



throne in A.D. 19, assumed the title of Mithradates II, 'great king of kings', after having thrown off the suzerainty of the Arsacids, and was still ruling in 55-8, when, according to his coinage, he tried to put Orthagnes,<sup>1</sup> an Arsacid agreeable to him, on the Iranian throne.

Gundopharr is the 'king of India', more correctly of Saka-stan, of the Acts of St. Thomas. In the Saka empire, not the own son, but the son of the sister, was the successor, an institution indicating female inheritance and queer forms of marriage, as in ancient Elam. The highest dignitary after the king had the title 'the king's brother', i.e. brother-in-law, consort of the king's sister, and father of the heir to the throne. He had the right of coinage. In the Acts of St. Thomas the first to be evangelized is the king's brother Gad, Guda of the coins. The king too favours Christianity, whence the weak orthodoxy of Rustam in the Iranian legend. The heir to the throne only appears in a book closely related to the Acts, the *Evangelium de transitu Mariae*, under the name 'Abdān, a short form of Abdagases, as the coins call him. The contemporary king of Iran, an enemy of Christian propaganda, is called Mazdai, that is simply 'the Mazdian, Zoroastrian'. According to the date he must be Gotarzes II Gēwpuhr, who left his sculpture at Behistun. Gotarzes' son Wēzhan and his wife Manēzha, the heroes of the love-romance of the *Shāhnāme*, in the Acts of St. Thomas are living at the court of Gundopharr.

We do not need to follow the ramifications of the Gundopharr legend. It is apparent that the glory of the history of Gundopharr caused the transformation of the old Sistanian myth of Krsāspa into a chivalric legend during the first century; the process is the same as the transformation of the older Germanic myths into the epics of the Nibelungs during the age of chivalry.

On the other hand, the Acts of St. Thomas introduced Gundopharr into the Christian legend. In the Occident the three Magi, whose heads are buried in the dome at Cologne,

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus calls him *filius Vardanis*; cp. *AMI*. iv. 102 ff.



are called *Kaspar*, Melchior, and Balthazar. The Armenian tradition has older names: Gadaspar for Kaspar. In the Syriac '*Treasure-cave*' his name is—with elements transposed, but still closer to the original—Farr-windādh; and in the vast oriental literature on the Three Magi it is really *Gundopharr*: Kaspar is Gundopharr. He is always the centre, around which other names are grouped, for he is the one of the Magi who is created after the image of a real person.

An event that happened at the end of Gundopharr's reign, and left a deep impression on the people's memory, seems to have co-operated towards his entering the Christian legend: the journey of the prince Tiridates to Rome. In the peace treaty of A.D. 61, Nero had stipulated for this visit, to bestow on Tiridates the crown of Armenia, which was already really his. The Roman authors describe the pompous journey. The king travelled with his queen and a suite of 3,000 magi from Hamadan to Rome entirely over land, from mere bigotry, so as not to defile the holy element of water by a long sea voyage. The triumphal journey culminated in the fêtes Nero gave, and the illumination of Rome; recalling the star that stood still over Bethlehem.

The Iranian epics contained, from old, a myth of a hero travelling into a far land to win a bride, which was told in the Achaemenian period, according to Alexander's chamberlain, Chares of Mytilene, under the names of Zariadres and Hystaspes; Firdausi calls the brothers Zarēr and Gushtāsp. During the Arsacid period the history of the kings Artaban II, Volagases I, and Tiridates grew into the old myth, and especially the myth of Zariadres was recast. The journey after the bride, under the impression of Tiridates' journey to Rome, became changed from one to the Far East into one to Rome; the bride, however, was not given up, but supplanted the crown, while the original hero Zariadres was replaced by his brother Vishtāspa. The conjecture that the Christian legend of the Three Magi also had been inspired by that journey of Tiridates has not met with approval, as no parallel could be afforded. The fact that the Iranian legend preserves



the memory of that journey is the wanted parallel. The Christian legend changes imperial Rome into Bethlehem, the birth-place of the ruler of the coming kingdom of God, and knowing nothing of Tiridates or such other Iranian heroes, replaces them by that contemporary king who was already connected with Christianity through the Acts of St. Thomas: Gundopharr.

On the one hand, therefore, he is the historical prototype of Rustam, the hero of the *Shāhnāme*; on the other hand, that of the leader among the Three Magi: Kaspar.

The ruins of the southern slope of the hill may be called a large castle or a small town. They have been used twice, and the traces of the restoration are visible everywhere. At first I expected to find an early and a late Sasanian period; but the earlier period is first century A.D., Arsacidan, or in the East to be called Saka, and the younger one is third century, early Sasanian, as proved equally by the architecture, the wall-painting, and the ornament. The castle comprises a palace and a temple; it is a royal building, and must be attributed to the king of the place at that time: Gundopharr. The popular name Kale i Rustam in a certain way is right, and we could as well call it the 'Castle of the Three Magi'.

The palace occupies the higher region of the castle, and is constructed around a vast court, part of which is seen on Pl. VIII. Its entrance is a vaulted gateway on the south side; on the west and east large barrel-vaults, *iwāns*, open on to the court, while the main façade, the north side of the court, towers high above the others in front of the ascending hill. It consists of a broad gallery with stairways leading up to a platform, the highest of the castle, where the temple stands.

It is the typical fire-temple, formerly unknown, but of which I have discovered during the last ten years about a dozen in Iran. The constituent parts are an inner room with cupola on four corner-piers, a closed narrow passage round it, in Greek terminology a 'krypta', and a gate which can assume various shapes. On the Kūh i Khwāja the temple



could not be misunderstood, for besides its situation in the entire composition, the foundation of the fire-altar in the room under the cupola was preserved, and the stone altar itself was found overturned near by.

The long gallery which extends behind the north front of the main courtyard (Pl. IX) showed in its first period a system of Doric columns, engaged in the wall, carrying an entablature slightly projecting and decorated with a Greek scroll, and a regular row of windows between the half columns. The device as a whole is Hellenistic, and was given up in Sasanian architecture. Seen from the Western point of view, it is nothing exceptional, and yet it is remarkable, being so far the only monument which gives us an idea of Graeco-Bactrian architecture.

The wall apparently was giving way under the weight of the vault, and had to be shored up in the second period. This was done by building a system of buttresses with barrel-vaults against it. The shape of the arches is parabolic. Against the lower part of the building, a solid substructure in the older period, a corresponding system of arches was put, and the small outer stairways were differently arranged.

The interior, too, had to be strengthened by a rather thick revetment wall which covered completely all the paintings of the first period (Pl. VIII). It was easy to think that this was done intentionally, and to derive a date from this observation: some iconoclastic time, e.g. the early Muhammedan period. But that is wrong: the only reason was to prevent the crumbling vault from falling. After the revetment had been taken away, the old paintings lay open.

A great number of the rooms were originally painted, above all the gallery. The wall-painting extends over the whole room: the back wall, 60 feet long, and without gaps or divisions; the front wall interrupted by regular windows; the deep jambs of those windows which in the second period had been completely walled up; and finally the barrel-vault itself. But the state of the painting was deplorable. The colours, where the surface was preserved, appeared fresh and



unaltered, not spoiled as usual by smoke and dirt; but mostly the surface was eaten by some insect, building nests like hornets. We did not see any living specimen, but as far as I understand, they were not white ants, a very common plague in Sistan. Other walls, e.g. the back of the gallery, in addition to this, had suffered by exudation of salts, whose hard crystals had eaten into the surface of the paintings.

All the faces of the walls are unbroken flat surfaces. With the sole exception of a little cornice, which marks the beginning of the vault, there is no plastic element in the room. Western architecture did not reach such a state before the Byzantine period. We have seen before that the rock-sculptures of Behistun were following pictorial principles; here, architecture, too, falls under the influence of painting.

The vault, originally a semicircular barrel, starts from the cornice, painted with a festoon of laurels under a dentil. The design on the vault, without any plastic relief, is that of a Greek coffered ceiling.

Every square contains alternately either an ornament or a figure. All this is Greek in its general qualities. The coffered ceiling has become a universal type of ceiling, not only in the West but also in oriental architecture: in the palaces of the khalifs at Samarra they look more Greek than the painted vault of the Kūh i Khwāja, since they have preserved in plaster the plastic relief of the Greek ceilings.

The simplest form of ornamental filling, repeated several times, consists of many-leaved rosettes, exactly speaking the full projection from above of a lotus. This design is of Egyptian origin and spread from thence over all the lands of the ancient East, but never played an important part in Greek decoration. In our monument it cannot be regarded as a Greek element, but only as derived from the Achaemenian variety, the severe composition of which has been replaced by a sketchy drawing, an illusion of naturalism. The rosette must have some unknown symbolic meaning. In Persepolis square stones are put out of sight under the thresholds of the doors with one large rosette facing down



towards the underworld: a position that indicates some magic virtue.

Other ornamental fillings are composite formations of four large palmettes arranged diagonally around a central disk. There are compositions of similar character in Greek coffered ceilings, but nearer come the designs on Achaemenian textiles, and by far the closest analogies are furnished by Assyrian knobbed tiles, the original use of which is not quite clear. In Assyrian and Achaemenian art the vegetal elements are derived from the Egyptian lotus and papyrus and from the Mesopotamian palmette; here, an element derived from the Greek acanthus has been introduced into the old composition. We observe always again the same process: the most striking feature has been taken over, but handled after old traditional practices. It is not a true comprehension of the foreign style, nor a real adaptation to the old one; the transformation remains superficial. Of five specimens so much is preserved that they can be restored, an important contribution to the ornament in Graeco-Bactrian art. That ornament was not merely Greek, but full of old oriental motives.

Among the figural pictures are two riders, one a winged Eros on horseback. There is nothing oriental in this picture; it is purely Greek. Its counterpiece is a similar rider on a leopard: still more Dionysiac than the other. The same kind of Eros, in various actions, is quite common as a decorative motive on silver works from neighbouring regions and of approximately the same period.

Besides, there are several figures merely resting, or playing an instrument, or dancing, and once an acrobat standing on his head. All this belongs to the usual repertory of Hellenistic decoration, the old mythical meaning of which has long been lost; it is, however, quite foreign to the principles and opposed to the ceremonial character of Achaemenian art. The grotesque motive of the acrobat had a great success; in the bad taste of Persian art of the nineteenth century, the female dancer in that pose is a favourite. The types of the heads are rather striking. They seem to combine an abstract idea of the



actual appearance of the people and a conventional drawing derived from Greek manner.

The paintings on the back wall of the gallery, which forms a retaining wall of the sloping mountain, have more than others suffered from salt. The only part still recognizable, though not in the exact middle of the wall, seems to have been the centre of the composition. A king and a queen are standing under an object like a canopy. The king, to the right and a little in front of the queen, lays his left arm around her, which results in rather an uncomfortable posture. But it is not an exceptional one, as it is found also on a rock-sculpture of Bahrām II at SarMashhad. It is a question of rank and a symbolic gesture in naturalistic disguise. The heads of both figures are seen in half-profile, their dress is a symphony in purple, from violet to scarlet, and both are covered with jewellery. The somewhat unceremonial pose of this group is due to Greek influence; the half-profile too, unknown to the East before, is derived from Greek art. But as a whole, composition and style do not simply belong to Western tradition, but more to an intermixture, such as may have been developed in Graeco-Bactria. And it is astonishing to behold, in the first century A.D., in the Far East where Iran, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan meet, a painting which one could imagine in a Gothic cathedral or a palace of the Ghibellines in Sicily.

Achaemenian art represents the king only in high ceremony, on the throne or in adoration, the projection being always pure profile. The transmutation of the types can be traced on Bactrian coins. Very early, under Euthydemus, the reverse shows the resting Herakles in a quite natural posture, and it seems as if the unceremonial pose of later representations of kings enthroned was derived from such a Greek prototype. Under Antialkidas, middle of the second century, we find Zeus on the throne, the whole design in half-profile, a device many times repeated on later coins. The easy, almost relaxed, attitude of the legs of the sitting god in half-profile was transformed into the sitting king with knees spread apart in front view.



In giving up the old solemnity and in copying Greek freedom, this art fell into the absolute extreme. Coins of the period directly after that of the Kūh i Khwāja furnish amazing examples, Fig. 9. These kings sprawl on their thrones in the most unmannerly way. Bevan calls it a characteristic of the Greek to have the sense of proportion in behaviour, which distinguishes what is seemly for the occasion and the person concerned. These figures are impossible in the Ancient East, they are imaginable only after Greek influence had been at work. But the result is the loss of old dignity, the distortion of the new freedom into a caricature of ill behaviour.

To understand the genesis of these wall paintings we must recur to the contemporary coins, on which several of the motives of the paintings are met, allowing one to date the paintings after the dated coins. Remembering the strong sculptural restraint of the earlier portrait heads on Seleucid and the first Arsacid coins, not to speak of the Graeco-Bactrian ones—the most perfect coins ever produced—it becomes evident that these later mint-emblems are not drawn by sculptors but by painters. Painting, in opposition to the development in the West, must have already replaced sculpture in the Graeco-Bactrian art. The reasons are to be looked for in spheres foreign to art. The predominance of painting led to quick decadence.

On the window-wall of the gallery, gods were represented. They simply stand there, inactive, in a true oriental way. But their very grouping in different planes of the picture is a feature derived from Hellenistic perspective. The design of the figures and of their heads is much more Greek than in the other paintings. The garments too are Greek, some of them with textile ornaments. The emblems and attributes of the gods are half-Greek, half-native. The helmet with two wings is in Greek art the emblem of Hermes; here it has three wings and signifies Vrthragna, the god of war. Another god holds the trident, to us the symbol of Poseidon and of naval supremacy, but according to the coins symbolizing the Indian Shiva. Some of the gods may be identified by comparison with the



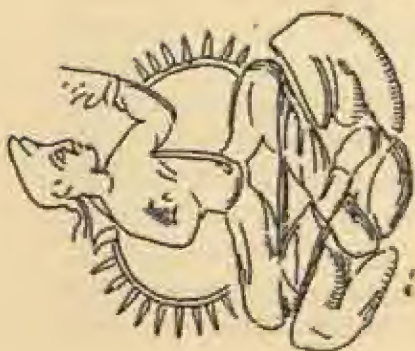
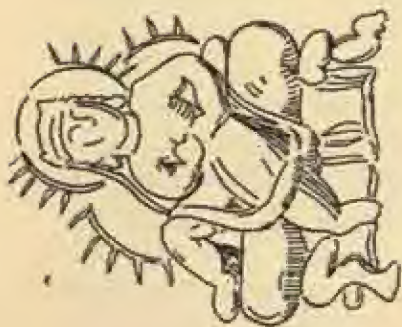


FIG. 9. Kings  
enthroned, from  
coin devices

Kūshān coins, where similar figures have their name inscribed.

It is no unusual observation that in images of gods old iconographic types survive which have been replaced by younger ones in the representation of men. From the gods of the Kūh i Khwāja, therefore, we may form a conception of what Graeco-Bactrian figural painting has been. With all the injury it has suffered, a head like that of one of these gods is remarkable as a work of Greek painting, and shows what some of the painters could do. But at the same time it makes clear the strange disparity, not only of quality but of style, among these pictures. If it was not a given fact, one would not think of assigning the same date to this divine head and another male head, and still less believe that they belong to two walls of one and the same room. It is noteworthy that the pronounced diversity of style coincides with the difference in projection. The half-profile of Greek origin is connected with the naturalistic design, while with the pure profile, a continuation of or relapse into ancient indigenous methods, always appears the survival of old indigenous drawing. On the two walls of the gallery two different and yet contemporary styles are opposed. This impression becomes more intense when we look at the paintings in the windows.

There the spectators at the fête are standing, the *misera plebs*. A few typical heads are still visible. They are the nearest approximation to the Old Persian type we know, all of them drawn in profile. The whole group may be considered as a third style, neither of Greek descent like the gods, nor produced by the developments of Graeco-Bactrian art. Even 300 years after the foundation and shortly after the disappearance of the Graeco-Bactrian empire, that art remains eclectic. The different elements have not been assimilated, something essentially new and original has not been created.

The assertion that the figures in the windows represent the true Old Persian style is proved by a small fragment in my collection which once must have been part of the shoe of a sculpture at Persepolis (Pl. X). On this polished stone,



before it received its purple paint, the sculptors—perhaps in conversation during their work—have engraved, with a sharp point, two human heads and that of a lion, small designs like miniatures which stand comparison with the best paintings on Greek vases, and which I regard as one of the finest specimens of Achaemenian art. Their special value is that they reveal to us what free artistic thought, what reality stands behind the hieratic and conventional abstraction of the Achaemenian sculpture, and how that sculptural abstraction was created.

Architecture and painting of the Kūh i Khwāja equally date the ruins in the first century A.D. The third indication is provided by the architectural ornamentation (Pl. X). The material is plaster. Every detail is known from Parthian buildings in Babylonia and Assyria, but the work of this Eastern specimen is by far the finest. Here we are nearer to its origin, a statement which implies no special praise. Gypsum in after-days had an immense success in Persian art. It must be the cheapness of it, its lack of character, its yielding to every artistic frivolity, that has made it the favourite material. Real art cannot be created without resistance to be overcome. Gypsum does not resist; it allows sham effects without labour. It dominates in Sasanian and early Muhammedan times in Persia; the medieval architecture revels in plaster, and to-day there is nothing but plaster. The oldest attempts are not without beauty, certainly effective; but the prevalence of plaster causes the hopeless decadence of architecture. Similar to the Safawid art of the sixteenth century, unduly overrated, this early architecture is already focused on mere decoration: the surface.

The walls are of stamped earth, not even of sun-dried bricks. In Babylonia baked brick is used, but that too is no material to create high architectural art. The architecture of the Arsacidan period is a relapse into almost prehistoric conditions. It is hard to believe how the marvellous technique of the Achaemenian period could be so completely lost and give place to such a low level. That the east of Iran,

usually far behind the west, took the leading part does not alone explain the phenomenon. The real reasons lie outside the sphere of art.

Looking back, we may state that the long prehistoric period of Iran is followed, about 700-400 B.C., by a period of ascending developments, more of adaptation than of creation. These developments, having already passed their culmination, are abruptly cut off by Alexander's conquest. The long period from 300 B.C. to A.D. 200 begins with complete surrender to everything European. But having lost its own traditions the art remains a mere eclecticism; it neither really understands nor assimilates the spirit of Hellenism. Predominant is painting, which contributes to the decomposition of sculpture and architecture. Accepted without resistance, Hellenism, while preparing the Western world for a great future, had the most destructive effect on Iran.



### LECTURE III

#### THE SASANIAN EPOCH

**E**XACTLY as 850 years before, under Cyrus, a northern dynasty was replaced by a southern one, thus in A.D. 224 the Arsacids were overthrown by the Sasanids. In the very details, the course of events runs parallel. Cyrus built Pasargadae as a visible token of his independence; Ardashir I built the town of Firuzabad under the name Ardashīr-Khurra, 'Ardashir's Majesty', and his Arsacidan lord writes him a letter: 'You miserable Kurd, how dare you build such a royal residence?'

The Sasanians traced their lineage back to the old kings, separated from them by a space of 550 years. In this gap belong the Stakhrīan coins, which have been so successfully classified by Sir George Hill that with our present knowledge nothing can be added. The series—though not complete—is a logical one, showing no signs of discontinuity. It joins immediately on to the coinage of the old Frātadāra. When, about 150 B.C., Pārs had been incorporated into the Arsacid empire, the title of its ruler was changed into the normal designation of a satrap, *shāh*, king. Among the proper names Autophradates-Vātfradāt remains common, but the most frequent is Darius-Dārā, and next to it Artaxerxes-Ardashīr. Elsewhere, these names are not attested outside the Achaemenian house.

A regular formula of the Sasanid protocol is 'whose lineage is from the gods'. As the language of this formula is Parthian, the Arsacids must have used it, and they may have chosen it in imitation of the apotheosis of Hellenistic kings; but in the case of the Sasanians it must be understood as a more modern substitute for the archaic *bagān* 'the divine', of the Frātadāra. The formula points to their Achaemenian descent.

The last of the Stakhrīan coins was struck by Ardashir before his sovereignty; the last but one by his elder brother

Shapur. Both bear on the reverse the head of their father Pāpak, in continuance of the preceding coin-devices. Of the three stages of Ardashir's own coinage as great king the last is an evident imitation of the late coinage of Mithradates II, 300 years older. It was Mithradates who reassumed the title of the Achaemenids as the restorer of the old empire, and Gundopharr assumed the title of Mithradates when he made himself independent. There can be no doubt that Ardashir consciously imitated the Mithradates coinage with the same meaning, whether the restoration was a programme or considered as realized. The Sasanians must have had certain historical knowledge.

The Iranian legend has completely forgotten the Achaemenids, and that legend was the only form of historical tradition in Iran. It knows one Bahman, father of Dārā, only in connexion with the imported myth of Semiramis, and in addition, Dārā, son of Ardashir, from translations of the romance of Alexander. Bahman and Ardashir were amalgamated into one person, and the father of Dārā became the ancestor of the Sasanids. If the alleged ancestorship had no reason but the two legendary names of the epics, the descent ought to be regarded as non-historical, although the name of that Bahman contains the sole dim reminiscence of the royal name of the great Darius: Dāraya-vahumanah. But most probably the case is quite different. The personal names Bahman and Dārā, taken from the epics, have been introduced subsequently into a vague tradition of Achaemenid descent, to better substantiate the claim, and the tradition may have been genuine, although the names are legendary. The fact itself would not be at all unlikely, as the contemporaneous houses of Atropatene and of Hyrcania can be traced back to the Achaemenian period.

Whereas the names Bahman and Dārā are taken from the legend, the name *Sāsān*, after whom the family is called in their own inscriptions *Sāsānakān*, seems to be historical. *Sāsān* has been introduced into the legend, alternating with Dārā, as a son of Bahman. The double filiation betrays the lineage



as artificial; Dārā is secondary, Sāsān original. Sāsān, however, is not a man, but the personification of a title, just as Wēžan is the personified title of the Hyrcanian prince royal. The Gāth. and Awest. title of a satrap or field-marshal is *sāstar-* 'commander', surviving in MP. and in '*kitāb al-sāstarān*', title of a book like the *Shāh-nāme*. In OP. the genitive of this Median word ought to be \**sāsθ'a-*, MP. \**sās*, whence *Sāsān* 'the commanders'.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Sasanian family-name perpetuates an OP. title, just as the Deiocids of Media appear in the legend as *kavi*, in Firdausī as *kayāniyān* 'the Royal ones'.

Ardashir's victory over the last Arsacid is pictured on a rock near Firuzabad (Pl. XI), of which no photographic survey had been made; we have already compared a detail of it with the sculpture of Gotarzes. The picture consists of three pairs of horsemen: to the right Ardashir with Ardavan V; in the middle his son Shapur, who, as told in the chronicle of Tabari, killed the vizier of Ardavan in that battle; and to the left a young page of the king, who drags an antagonist from the saddle. All the figures bear crest and coat of arms, also on their horses' armour. In the third century A.D. chivalry and feudalism were completely developed in Iran, a thousand years earlier than in Europe. The crests identify the figures on various bas-reliefs, just as the individual crowns of the kings, compared with their coins, assign all the sculptures to their rightful owners, even in the absence of inscriptions.

Here the historical event is not condensed into one realistic and dramatic moment, as, for example, Alexander's victory over Darius III in the famous mosaic of Naples, but, contrary to the principle of Hellenistic art, is symbolized by three tournaments. These single-combats never happened, but express the idea in a perfect and unmistakable way according to the naïve, mythical mind of the people. The same principle prevails at Behistun, where Darius puts his

<sup>1</sup> NP. *sāsān*, not in common language, is said to have also the meaning 'beggar', as *kandak* in MP. is 'foundling'.



foot on the vanquished Gaumāta, and where the nine 'pseudo-kings' stand in front of him as prisoners. That too never actually happened, but is perfect as a succinct, graphic description of the historical and ethical contents of the inscription. It is the old oriental principle of the 'speaking gesture', of the symbolical and epical as opposed to the dramatic style of Greek art. The triumphal sculpture of AnnuBanini at Sarpul, 2,000 years before Darius, is identical in principle and details of composition. Behistun is not the spontaneous imitation of any such antique work, nor is the sculpture of Ardashir; they are but the continuance of, or the relapse into most ancient methods and ideas. That observation, valid not only in art but in many other spheres, may be generalized. The Sasanian epoch is one of reaction of the oriental mind against Hellenism.

The younger the period, the greater the number of monuments surviving. But here the monuments are not at all equally distributed over the whole epoch, nor over the extent of the empire. On the contrary, they are limited to short spaces of time and to a few localities. This circumstance, from the beginning, reveals something artificial in this movement; the reaction was not quite spontaneous, and the Sasanian art is not a product of the essence of the people.

There are some twenty rock-sculptures, but with two exceptions, viz. one picture of Ardashir west of the Urmiya Lake, and the Tāq i Bustān near Kirmanshah, all of them lie in the province of Pārs, and if there are any other pictures they can only be expected south of Firuzabad in the same province. The date of the sculptures is, with the sole exception of the Tāq i Bustān (about A.D. 600), the few years from A.D. 224 to 300. This would indicate a local development, concentrated into a few years; but that again is contradicted by the lack of a continuous development of style.

Up to now, an early group, the work of Ardashir I, 224-41, could be distinguished, followed by a second stage under the long reign of Shapur I, and reaching an apogee with the only picture of Bahrām I, 274-7. After that the vitality



diminishes, and already under Bahrām II (till 293) a complete stagnation begins. But even during the short period of ascendance under Shapur I, the art shows no logical development.



Fig. 10. Graffito of Shapur, elder brother of Ardashir I, at Persepolis.

Recently, three still older graffiti have been discovered at Persepolis that allow a deeper insight into the beginnings, two of a prince standing, Fig. 10, one of a rider. Compared with the coins, one of the standing figures can be identified—not quite certainly on account of the damaged condition of

the crest—with Shapur, the elder brother of Ardashir, who ruled only three months and is said to have been killed at Persepolis by a falling stone. The design could almost be Ardashir I himself before becoming a great king. The second figure, very similar, perfectly preserved and nicely drawn, is their father Pāpak; and the horseman, an elaborate design in the style of the later rock-sculptures, is one Manuchihr of Stakhr, who according to the arrangement of the coins by Sir George Hill is separated from Ardashir I only by two generations, Pāpak and Ardashir IV of Stakhr, and hence may be dated approximately A.D. 150–175.

These drawings, which anticipate two constituent motives of Sasanian art, belong entirely to the realm of painting. Supposing the rock-sculptures had been unknown, acquaintance with these drawings would have led no one to expect to find them again transfigured into the colossal reliefs. And remembering the conclusions drawn from the sculptures of the Arsacidan period at Behistun, and from the paintings at the Kūh i Khwāja, we can establish that not only the late stage of Sasanian art, the Tāq i Bustān, but the rock-sculpture in its initial stage depends on painting, and that the branch of art in which this special style was created and developed was not sculpture but painting.

The main work of Ardashir's period is the sculpture at Naqsh i Rostam, which represents his investiture by the god Hormizd. The Iranian conception of the divine right of kings, going back to an almost prehistoric period, in Sasanian times was clothed with a knightly appearance. Just as Mithradates invests his feudal dignitaries, thus, in Sasanian art, the god invests the king with ring and sceptre. The attribution to Ardashir, certain by itself, is confirmed by a trilingual inscription in Arsacidan and Sasanian Pahlavi, and in Greek. Nothing else is Greek in this sculpture, except, at best, the high relief. The whole idea of it is not dramatic, but symbolical, and moreover magic. Both horsemen stand over a prostrate enemy, the god on the devil, characterized by his coiffure of snakes, the king on Ardavan, the last Arsacid,



marked by his crest. The picture not only wants to tell us that Ardashir defeated the Arsacid and was invested with supreme power by the grace of Hormizd, but is intended to eternalize his victory and his dynasty.

The composition is absolutely symmetrical. Already in Achaemenian art the feeling for symmetry is strong; e.g. at Persepolis it leads to the strange repetition of the great tribute procession, in its entire development of almost 300 feet, on two adjacent sides of the sustaining wall of the great *apadāna*. The same need for symmetry dominates architecture and the applied arts. The relief of Ardashir is a classic example of what has been called 'heraldic style', which was imported as a foreign element into ancient Greece from the East via Asia Minor. If it appears in Sasanian art in its purest shape, after the moderation in which it was employed in Achaemenian art, it means a relapse into innate postulates, like the principle of speaking symbolism.

On a sculpture of Bahrām I at Bishāpūr, with the same subject, the symmetry is somewhat softened; at least the horses' heads no longer touch each other. The design of the animals, in its entire plasticity, is, to us, an improved naturalism. In this picture Sasanian art culminates, but the preceding reliefs do not lead to it in a regular ascending curve. Attempts of very different character were made and abandoned; again and again one feels the participation of foreign hands. The monument of Bahrām is also notable for quite a different reason. According to its style and the crown of the king, it belongs to Bahrām I, and thus it was described in an inscription in the right upper corner. But the name has been erased and replaced by that of his younger brother Narseh, who became king only sixteen years later, after Bahrām's grandson. The account of his irregular succession is given in the inscription of Paikuli, the only really historical inscription of the age. 'This is a rare case of useless falsification,' betraying a deep hatred between the brothers, to

<sup>1</sup> Compare the khalif al-Ma'mūn substituting his name for that of 'Abd al-malik in the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem.



which may also be ascribed the intentional mutilation of the adjoining sculpture of Bahrām II, Narseh's nephew and predecessor.

This sculpture represents the subjection of some Arab tribes not mentioned in history. The king is seen on horseback to the left, the Arabs to the right, introduced, exactly as the foreign nations in the tribute procession at Persepolis, by a Persian usher, and bringing their tribute of horses and camels. The group of men and animals in four planes, the figures overlapping each other and forming a congested crowd, is quite pictorial. It suffices to contrast the Persepolis tribute procession with the space between the figures and its clearness of design, to understand that the principles of the Bishāpūr sculpture are not those of a sculptor.

The father of Bahrām, Shapur I, had won a great success in A.D. 260 which he pictured five times, thrice at his residence Bishāpūr: the victory over Valerian, and the capitulation of the Roman army. The differences in style between the five representations elucidate best how strongly not only foreign influences but foreign hands must have been at work in Sasanian sculpture.

The prototype is shown by the gigantic sculpture at Naqsh-e Rostam: the king on horseback; before him, kneeling and begging mercy, the Emperor, whose head is like the portrait on his coins; in the background a Roman, standing, whose hand the king grasps. It has been tried in vain to discover what historical figure this Roman is meant to represent. As a matter of fact, Shapur's victory was dubious and not a lasting one. The Persian army, finding no resistance except at Edessa, overflowing and plundering the whole land, became disorganized to such a degree that weak resistance, locally organized, had great issue. A self-appointed leader, Kallistos, attacked a Persian corps in Cilicia, took the harem of Shapur prisoner, and Shapur, in the greatest haste, returned to Ctesiphon, purchasing his passage through Mesopotamia at the cost of all his captured gold. From Rome things were quickly restored. Gallienus, the Caesar of the



West, conferred the post of Caesar of the East on Odenathus, prince of Palmyra. What the picture of Shapur expresses by its symbolism is perfectly clear. The king of kings, having captured the Emperor, gives away the Caesarean majesty to a man of his choice, in contradiction to the historical facts, but as a desire to be realized by the magic of the picture.

In the sculptures of Bīshāpūr the same subject has been enlarged. To the right are represented, above three, below two groups of footmen, always three together. For the relations of Sasanian art to the East these groups are specially interesting; for their close similarity, almost identity, with groups in Buddhist paintings from Central Asia shows that, although Hellenistic as a whole, Asiatic in most of its details, this art is not of western Greek, but of Graeco-Bactrian origin. To the left, in two larger panels, the cavalry appears. The single horsemen are echeloned in such a way that only the whole figure and horse of the last one is shown in full; of all the others the fore-part only. This pictorial expedient gives the illusion of a very large number. That they are all identical is an archaic feature, at the same time utterly un-Greek.

On a second sculpture at Bīshāpūr (Pl. XII) the cavalry is still better represented. It is really a very large number, sixty figures in four rows. Little differences in outfit and helmets indicate the foremost figures as men of high rank. The scale is less than half life-size, a striking contrast to the scale, three times life-size, of Naqsh i Rostam. The little figures, in long files between a frame, recall the Roman triumphal sculptures, especially those of the triumphal columns. The Roman captives built for Shapur the great system of roads, bridges, irrigation-works, and dams in Khuzistan, the one at Shushtar still called the *band i Kaisar*. It is only reasonable to assume that among the prisoners there were numbers of masons and sculptors who co-operated in creating Shapur's numerous sculptures.

How such an army, a great crowd of men, was represented



in Achaemenian art may be studied in the great tribute procession of Persepolis. The division into parallel zones, the exact separation of infantry and cavalry, are the same; the framework, left unwrought in Bishāpūr, is decorated with rosettes in Persepolis. The main difference is that in Achaemenian art the principles of sculpture dominate; hence the figures are clearly spaced, no overlapping occurs, much of the ground is shown, everything is clear; there are no pictorial effects. The armies of Shapur are the Old Persian forms in Graeco-Bactrian dress.

The picture of the horsemen was a detail of a very large sculpture which represents the whole army. As in Persepolis, the one side is occupied by the troops, waiting inactively, as mere spectators, the other side by the tribute-bearers (Pl. XII). Apparently Romans and Persians are mixed; the physical types, costumes, armour are scarcely correct, and the unfinished state of many of the details makes it difficult to interpret the various objects which the soldiers are carrying. They look more like spoil than tribute. The main scene (Pl. XI), showing Shapur and Valerian, is put in the middle, corresponding to the second zone from below. By this disposition, in the vertical axis of the picture a void is produced which cuts the whole in two parts, most ungainly. Such a thing would be unthinkable in Hellenistic art, and is only possible where a picture is regarded not as an artistic unit but as a narrative. It is another relapse into old oriental methods, the more striking as the Hellenistic style of the details demands the unity of the whole, and stands in unmitigated contradiction to the composition.

A comparison of the two middle pieces of the large pictures illuminates the differences of style that prove the artificial character of all these works. To the prototype, as represented by Naqsh i Rostam, two Persian dignitaries are here added to the right, further a little Victory that crowns the king, a cheap Hellenistic symbol already used in the Gotarzes sculpture at Behistun, and a dead enemy under the horse. This really ought to be the same Valerian who is kneeling before



the king, but symbolizes the 'Roman' in general and has the same magic significance as in the picture of Ardashir's investiture: to make the triumph permanent. The Roman protégé, here, is conducted by the king to meet Valerian. Both pictures are essentially the same, but the design of the second has much more movement and freedom: it is superior to such a degree that, if by chance it were an undated mythical subject, and not one and the same historical event, one would not attribute both to the same time. The differences in style must be the work of artists of different origin who had to execute a prescribed task.

Many of the details also show the changed style, but unchanged spirit. In the second row (Pl. XIII), for example, soldiers who, in spite of their Mongoloid exterior, most probably are meant to be Roman legionaries, are leading, as spoil or as tribute, a pair of lions, in the row below an elephant and a horse. In Persepolis the Armenians are seen bringing horses, the Khuzians a lioness turning back furiously to her cubs. The idea is old and similar, the execution modernized and foreign.

Or take the picture of a chariot. It ought to be that of the emperor, and reminds one of a portable *sella curulis*, but is scarcely correctly drawn. The right horse is far in front, the left one so far back that it does not appear to draw the chariot. Both cover a tribute-bearer in the background, whose action is not connected with the chariot, whereas, in the original iconographic scheme, his place ought to be taken by the leader of the chariot. How this motive is treated in Persepolis is shown by a section from the tribute of the Syrians: several planes are already used by this old sculpture, but the projection of two horses and one man into the low relief is masterly; a difficult problem is solved to perfection under the coercion of space and material, as a real sculptor only can solve it. The same motive at Bishāpūr, on the contrary, looks like the sketch for a painting, executed exceptionally in stone. The correspondence of the composition in spite of that different character is striking.



Another rock-sculpture at Bishāpūr represents the triumph over an Indian people. The historical circumstances are not mentioned, neither in Roman nor in Eastern sources. But already Ardashir had made conquests in the East, and Shapur, who assumed the title of 'king of kings of Ērān' most probably enlarged them. In that picture a groom is leading the king's saddle-horse (Pl. XII), a subject also occurring among the sculptures of Persepolis. The comparison teaches the same. The Sasanian style is sketchy, concealing and leaving in the dark many things. In Persepolis we admire the artistic honesty; everything is clear.

In the middle of the Indian triumph is Shapur on the throne. The sculpture is only half-finished; the crown is meant to be a broadly projecting, turreted crown, surmounted by a globe. What looks like the three heads of a *trimurti* is in reality the king's face between two puffs of curls. We have touched on the subject of the projection already when discussing the painting of the king at the Kūh i Khwāja. Achaemenian art knows only the profile view of the highly ceremonious scene. On the Bactrian coins we can observe the gradual transition from pure profile over three-quarter to full front view. In Sasanian art the last scheme occurs again on a much destroyed sculpture of Shapur I at Naqsh i Rostam and on one of Bahram II at Naqsh i Bahrām; it is rather common in the industrial art of the late Sasanian and early Muhammedan periods. The Bactrian provenance is, in this case, very safely proved. The effect of full front view with knees asunder is barbarous, but intentional. In the oldest oriental art the front view, almost exclusively used for heads of demons, protective or malignant, and for lions, is always apotropaic; to repulse, frighten. The pure side view of all other pictures is harmless; it is looked at, as a story is heard. The front view of the heads speaks to the onlooker, it assails him. There are two reasons for representing particularly the king in front view. He is the natural centre of the picture, and the feeling for symmetry demands this centre to be drawn in strict symmetry. At the same time,



the terror must be expressed which the sight of the oriental ruler inspires. Although it has passed through the medium of Greek art, this picture is thoroughly Asiatic.

If the assertion that Sasanian art is a reaction of the oriental mind against Hellenism is true, we ought also to make similar observations in architecture. Not a few ruins are known, most of them badly destroyed and unexplored by excavation, all of them, even the most insignificant ones, called palaces, none a temple: a most improbable state *ipso facto*.

Long ago, after having been the first time in Qasr i Shirin, the idea struck me that the ruin called *čuar-gapu*, 'four-gates', might be a fire-temple. It could not be a palace, for the large palace of Khusroy II, of quite a different type, stands at its side. It is a domed building, and the Arab authors mention the emblems on the domes of Sasanian fire-temples; the dome rises free in the middle of a court, as if separated by a temenos from the profane outer world.

The only building comparable, then, was the temple of the sun-god in Hatra, not exactly Iranian, but Arabic, and not a real fire-temple, but also a square, vaulted room with the emblems of the sun-god on the lintel of the door, and, as a sure sign of its religious character, surrounded by a narrow, vaulted passage, a '*krypta*', like, for example, the temple of Nemausus and Plotina at Nîmes. The Romans mention it when speaking of the sieges of Hatra by Trajan and Septimius Severus. The type is related to some Nabataean temples of pre-Muhammedan Arabs, and relations to Iran were quite possible.

This reasoning was right. In 1923 Sir Percy Loraine showed me a place in the Shahriyār district, called Takht i Rustam, Rustam's throne (Pl. XV). It is a natural pyramid of basalt on which is built, at a third of its height, one platform, and a second on its summit. The platforms measure about 60 feet square and from 12 to 18 feet high, and are constructed, seemingly without mortar, of a stone that breaks in flat, brick-shaped pieces, sometimes of considerable size. The technique, not observed in Sasanian

but in Arsacidan ruins, although perhaps due to local conditions, can be considered as Arsacidan.

The ruins mark a Mazdian place of worship, as, for certain ceremonies, 'high-places' were used; Herodotus also mentions them. Of the sanctity of the place a little modern *imāmzāde* near the lower platform is witness: an example of Sir William Ramsay's 'law of the persistence of worship', for which there are countless proofs.



FIG. 11. High-place and lower temple of Kale i Dukhtar, Khurasan.

The same combination of high-places and lower temple occurs in the ruins of Kale i Dukhtar, the 'Princess' castle' in Khurasan, Fig. 11. Here the lower structure has the normal appearance of a Sasanian temple: clumsy walls of rubble in thick mortar, a high parabolic cupola, constructed over a square room with four large arched openings and resting on primitive bridging of the angles, and around the central room a narrow passage. All the later discoveries tended to confirm the conclusion that they are all fire-temples. The last proof was furnished by the temple on the Kūh-i Khwāja, dated from the first century, where we unearthed in the central room the base of the altar and, near by, found the overturned stone altar.

That altar has the Arsacidan shape known also from Babylonia and Assyria: a cylindrical or double-conical shaft on a few steps, serving as a basis, and the same steps reversed as top, with a cavity for the fire. The Sasanian altars, known so far from pictures only, resemble the Arsacidan, if of stone,



but with higher proportions; if of metal, they consist of a large brazier on a tripod, sometimes with a central support.

The name of the ruin at Qasr i Shīrīn, *čūār-qapu*, is Kurdish and means 'four-gates' or 'quadruple-gate'. In Fārs the usual name of the ruins of the same description is *čār-tāq*, 'four arches, gates'. The designation is perfectly natural, as the ruins consist of four arches, and yet it means more, viz. a term of architecture. The word resembles *čār-sūq*, an Arabicized Old Persian word, understood as 'four bazars', but originally 'four-cornered, quadrangle', at the same time '*forum*, market-place'; or *čār-jūy*, 'four canals', mod. *haud*, for the water-cisterns or '*castella*' usually placed where two canals cross each other.<sup>1</sup> To these terms belongs *čār-tāq*.

A building of the same class exists at Firuzabad. On a high square substructure of hewn blocks—a rare thing in Sasanian architecture—with four flights of steps, once stood a cupola resting on four corner piers. The building is mentioned in the Pahlavi *Kārnāmak i Artaxšīr*, 'Res gestae Artaxaris'; a short description is given by Tabari from the Sasanian 'Book of Lords', and a more explicit one by some early geographers. The building is unanimously attributed to Ardashir I, but two distinct subjects are partly confused: the great palace of Ardashir some miles outside the town, with a warm spring in its forecourt, and the temple inside the town on the platform. Tabari calls the palace *šīrbāl*, whereas according to the description—and etymology—the expression clearly applies to the temple. The word *šīrbāl*, in Arabic, can stand for the *terminus* of a racecourse, but otherwise is exclusively used for this building. In spite of its Arabic appearance, it might be a loan-word from the Pahlavi, singular to *šarābāl*,<sup>2</sup> taken as an Arabic 'broken plural', from Greek *tetrapylon*, quadruple gate, Kurdish *čūār-qapu*, NP. *čār-tāq*: about A.D. 224 a temple in the far distant Firuzabad had the Greek name *tetrapylon*.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the Nabat. term ארבעתא or רבעתא for the temples, which resemble the Iranian.

<sup>2</sup> [Ca. 600 A.D. *šrb'* occurs as *tlw'r* > NP. *tālār* 'hall' in Tphl.]

On the foundation and history of the fire-temples literature contains considerable and, where we can check it, correct information. In the valley of Gira, between Firuzabad and Kāzarūn, I found, besides other remains, the ruins of two

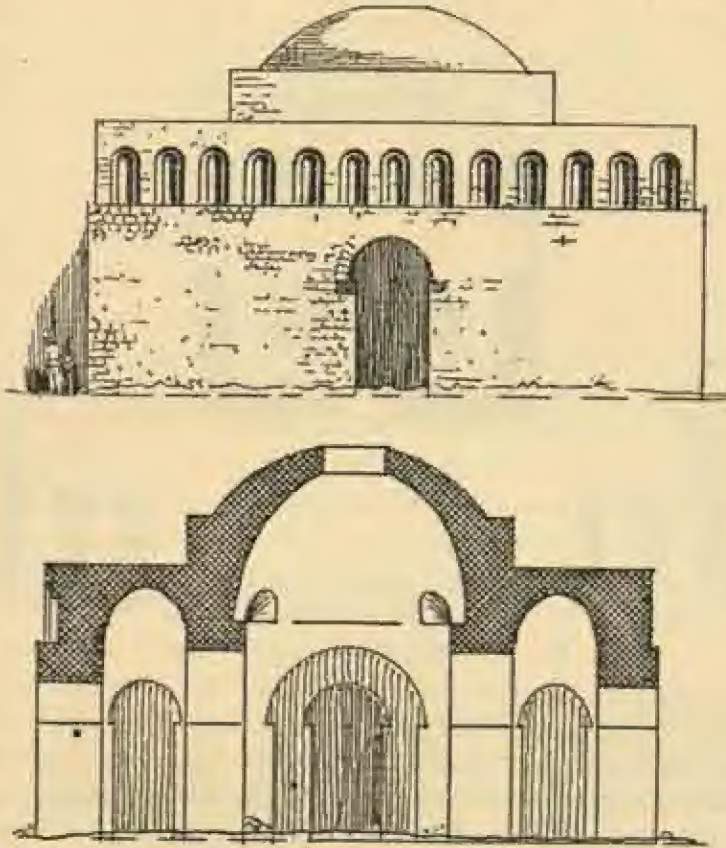


FIG. 12. Fire-temple Ār-tāq near Gira.

larger and two smaller fire-temples, to be ascribed on account of some details of plan and construction to the middle Sasanian period, Figs. 12 and 13. Their history we learn through Tabari, from the Sasanian prosaic *Shāh-nāme*. Bahrām V Gōr, the son of queen Suzan, had a vizier Mīhrnarseh son of Burāza, known to the Byzantines, Theophanes and Sokrates, as Narsaios. The village Burāzgūn



and the River Burāza still bear the name of the father; the son is called 'the sage of his age', like some other Persian viziers, but never a king. The father, whom a late legend has completely transformed into myth, was a *Vēfagān*, or *Gēwpuhr*, of the Hyrcanian house of Gotarzes.

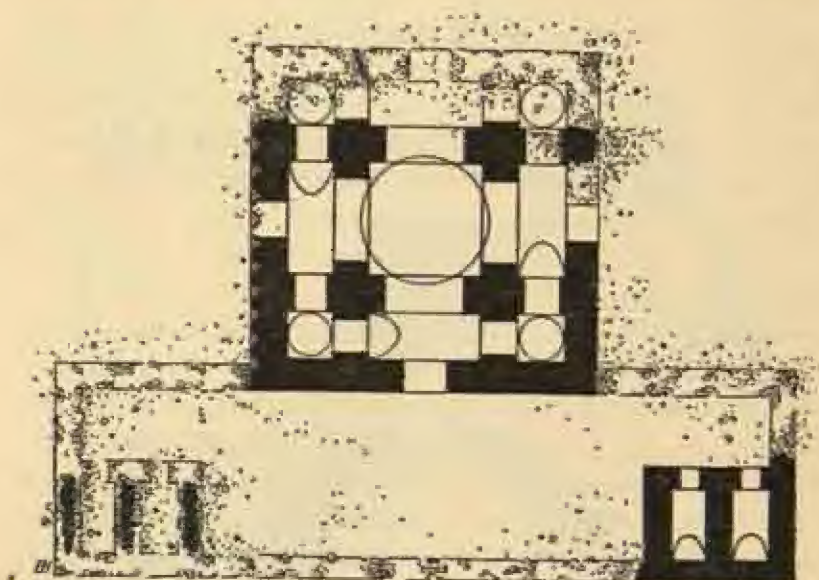


FIG. 13. Fire-temple Ār-tāq near Gira.

The feudal system having been abolished by Ardashir, the hereditary princes henceforth appear as viziers and ministers. Mihrnarsch had three sons, Zervāndādh, Māhgushnāsp, and —corrupt in Tabari, but to be supplied from Dinawarī—Gōdarz, minister of war. Now Tabari relates that Mihrnarsch founded four villages in the valley of Gira, district Shapur, each with a fire-temple, the first called *Farāz-marā-āvar-ḫvadāy*, 'Come near to me, lord'—possibly surviving in Farāshband, the modern name of one of the ruins—the three others dedicated to and named after his sons. In connexion with them he planned three gardens, one with 12,000 palms, one with 12,000 olive-trees, one with 12,000 cypresses. At the time of either Tabari or his immediate source, Ibn al-

Muqaffa', about 800, the properties were still flourishing and in possession of the family. There is no reason to doubt that the four ruins of fire-temples in Gira are those of the four fire-temples founded by Mihrnarsch.

The holy fires burnt in strictly closed rooms and were carefully sustained; but there were from old a few, called *axvarīnīk*, 'needing no food', and regarded as miraculous, like the oil-springs of Bākū and Dāmghān, both attested in the Sasanian period, and already in Arsacidan time, and probably first mentioned under Alexander, Masjid i Sulaimān, of world-wide modern fame as the location of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

The architectonic type of the temples, then, is Arsacidan and Sasanian, with no apparent relation to the older types of Achaemenian, but possibly to the Nabataean and Mesopotamian temples. The origin still remains obscure; but the adoption of a new or essentially altered type was evidently connected with the general introduction of vaulting during the early Hellenistic period, and the cupola on squinches over a square room is genuinely Iranian; for it is met with everywhere in rustic building and is totally distinct from the Roman system of vaulting, where the cupola originates from the circular room.

The Sasanian fire-temple survives under a changed purpose. The great sanctuaries of the Shi'ite Imams, in 'Iraq and Iran, reproduce faithfully, though in modernized shape, the Sasanian fire-temple: the cupola over the square room as tomb-chamber, the cenotaph at the place of the fire-altar, a vaulted passage around, for the *ṭawwāf*—walking three times around the sepulchre—and the monumental gateway.

Private buildings are not yet known, except those recently excavated by the Metropolitan Museum's expedition in Old Shirāz. All the other large ruins are connected with royal residences. Just as the Achaemenids did not live in Persepolis, but in Susa and Babylon, the Sasanids usually resided in Ctesiphon, near Baghdad. The ruins of the *Tāq i Kisrā* are well known.



*Tāq* is a Persian word for arch, interchangeable with *ēwān*, which has the same meaning as OP. *apadāna*, 'royal audience hall'. *Kisrā* is the general Arabic name for the Sasanids, derived from the names of Khusroy I and II, and assimilated to the Arabic form for the Roman Caesars, *qaisar*; there were the *qayāsira* in the West, the *akāsira* in the East. It is only natural if the later Arabs believe that one of the two Khusroys, *Kisrā*, built the *Tāq i Kisrā*; but their date, A.D. 550-600, does not fit. The true information is found in the old historical book of Hamza al-Isfahānī, first half of the tenth century: 'I have read in a book, translated by Ibn al-Muqaffa', that the *ēwān* still existing at Ctesiphon was built by Shapur I, son of Ardashir'. Ibn al-Muqaffa', the translator of the Sasanian *Xudāy-nāmak*, on which Tabari and others, indirectly also Firdausi, are based, is the very authority on Sasanian tradition. The notice is undoubtedly authentic. And if Hamza adds 'but that is not right, as the *mōbedhān-mōbedh* Umēdh assured me, for, the khalif al-Manṣūr destroyed that palace, and what is called *ēwān* to-day was built by Khusroy II', the great *Mōbedh*, a man connected with the composition of the *Dēnkart*, is mistaken. It is a typical example of reconciling contradictory information. The story of the khalif's attempt to destroy the Sasanian palace is famous, but we know that it was too difficult and too expensive to be accomplished. The *mōbedhs* are a not very reliable source of history.

The *Tāq i Kisrā* is impressive by its gigantic dimensions. The hall is more than 75 feet wide, almost 150 feet deep, and the original height of the arch was about 90 feet. But on closer inspection, one is struck that no attempt is made to reconcile the enormous hole of the vault with the wall of the façade, and that this wall is a complete mystification, a blind with no building behind it. The details are just as faulty as the whole. The blind arcades stop dead at the great hole, the units are not even complete in themselves, but simply cut through, equally at the outer end of the wall, where the arcade of the lower story remains incomplete. The three

double-stories of arcades have no common vertical axes, a disposition indispensable in such a type of decorative architecture. Every single observation reveals that a Hellenistic façade, like that of a Roman theatre or a *septizonium*, has been imitated without understanding its essence and nature. It is a Persian building in European masquerade, in a garb made by a bad tailor, or, better, bought second-hand; a monument of artistic dishonesty. And that is the great palace of the Khosroes.

About twenty years older are the palaces of Firuzabad, built by Ardashir previous to his victory over Ardavan, A.D. 224, in the distant province of Fārs, before there were close connexions with 'Irāq and the West. The relation between Cyrus' Pasargadae and Darius' Persepolis is a very similar case. And just as Pasargadae is entirely Iranian, so Firuzabad shows the unadulterated Persian style, which was handsome and became exchanged under Shapur for a counterfeit.

Ardashir's castle (Pl. XIV) stands on the summit of a high mountain near Firuzabad, on a plateau from which drop vertical precipices. The plateau forms the main court, once encircled by walls; at the narrow side staircases, in two huge square towers, lead up to a higher level, occupied by vaulted chambers around a little court. And again on a higher level stands the castle proper: a barrel-vault of 45 feet span, as wide as the nave of our largest cathedrals, and behind it the throne-hall, a square room covered by a mighty cupola, the whole building *one* huge round tower of 100 feet diameter. In front of the open *ēwān* there is a free space with the remains of a seat, a throne, from which one overlooked the whole land. When I was there, in spring, light clouds were hanging below over the deep gorge in which the Burāza river runs. If the famous Tāq i Kisrā at Ctesiphon is a theatrical fake worthy of a Potemkin, this castle of Ardashir is a castle of the Holy Grail.

On the outside of the round tower narrow salients and recesses alternate, derived from slightly projecting towers of



fortification walls which already in Achaemenian architecture had become a mere wall-decoration. That is the way a good architectonic idea ought to originate: a primarily practical form generalized by long habitude. The recesses, in older style terminated by a straight cornice with dentil, are in Sasanian style connected by small arches, the dentils of which still indicate their origin (Pl. XV). The palace of Firuzabad shows the motive in better preservation. This artistic treatment of large exterior walls is quite equal to the Greek idea of engaged colonnades or arcades, whether it was used in simple or somewhat richer rhythm. Fortunately, after the aberration of Ctesiphon, the genuine style again breaks through, and was continued in Muhammedan architecture.

The place for Ardashir's palace, outside the town, was chosen in order to include, in its forecourt, the marvellous warm spring there, whose waters pour forth, always with the same force and the same moderate temperature. A grove of myrtles, up to 15 feet high, surrounds the pond, and emits in spring an overpowering scent.

The great parabolic vault in Firuzabad opens between the two wings of the front which, perfectly logically, are the supporting walls of large barrel-vaults, perpendicular to the main vault, that take up its lateral pressure. These walls are decorated at the foot with a row of small niches, and of higher ones on a higher level. If these niches terminated at some distance from the parabolic opening, the architectonic idea was all right. On the sides of the palace, where there is no opening, the same narrow and high salients and recesses are used as at the castle on the mountain.

The plan (Pl. XVI) consists of: the entrance, the 'porte'; the square throne-hall with a high cupola; this room is redundantly repeated, right and left, only for symmetry's sake, a strong feeling that led to the idea of laying a transverse axis through the main axis of the building. Behind this front part of the palace, the *sarai*, extends the *harem*, the dwelling quarter with vaulted chambers around an interior

square courtyard. The entrance from the main throne-hall leads through an open *iwān* which has its counterpart in the opposite wall.

These Sasanian buildings look very different from the Achaemenian, in consequence of the changed material, stone and mortar, and of the resulting vaulting. But the disposition of the rooms, which depends upon the manner of daily life, is not changed. The broad portico of Persepolis, with its colonnade, has become a deep vault; the hypostyle hall, oblong in Pasargadae, square in Persepolis, has become the cupola over the square room. The need for symmetry that, already in Achaemenian architecture, caused the change of oblong room into square, has caused in Firuzabad the threefold repetition of the same room. All the essentials are unchanged; in a later garb, it is the old palace.

The entire plan is primeval-Iranian. It was common, as the rock-tombs teach, already in the Median and pre-Median epoch, and lives up to the present day in rustic and rural architecture. Where there is no wood, as in eastern Iran, one can observe the transition from wood column and ceiling to vaulting, from the Achaemenian to the Sasanian variety. Vaulting in clay, not even sun-dried brick, requires narrow and deep rooms without considerable span. But as soon as a little wood is available, e.g. in Nashtafūn or Rūy Khwāf, districts next to the Afghan frontier where pine-trees grow, wood structure is preferred.

Such a peasant's house consists of an open room between two closed rooms on one side of a walled-in court. Greater or richer families have the luxury of two such houses opposed on the same court. With that disposition, the plan of the palace of Firuzabad is reached. Larger villages, with some traffic, have small caravansarais, where the same group of rooms is repeated on the four sides of the court. The result is the 'cruciform plan', with four *iwāns* on a court, of the mosques and madrasas of Muhammedan Persia.

Enlarged into unbelievable dimensions, the same poor peasant's house constitutes the great palace of the successors



of Harūn al-Rashīd at Samarra, which reproduces, three hundred times larger, the palace of Ardashir. The distance from the entrance vault to the back of the inner court, 300 feet in Firuzabad, is almost exactly one mile. While everything is enlarged and multiplied accordingly, the disposition remains unaltered: at the right place are the throne-rooms, but, with demand for symmetry becoming more imperative, not only repeated right and left, but four times in the shape of a cross.

Even down to recent stages of Muhammedan architecture the old type prevailed, not as palace, but as madrasa. The madrasa at Khargird (Pl. XVII), built in the middle of the fifteenth century by Qiwām al-dīn, the great architect of the Timurid Shāhrokh,<sup>1</sup> again reproduces exactly the plan of the palace of Firuzabad. The entrance vault, no longer the scene of public audiences, has been reduced to a great porch; the throne-hall, without a king, no longer dominates the plan of the madrasa, but has kept its two repetitions right and left; the house proper around the court, where now many students live instead of the king and his harem, has been increased; to the two *iwāns* in the main axis two others have been added in the transverse axis of the court.

For the history of Muhammedan architecture these developments are fundamental. In Iran there is no essential distinction between mosque, madrasa, and caravansarai; they all descend directly from the same old Iranian house, differing only in accessories adapted to the special purpose. After the middle Seljuk epoch, the madrasa, created as a political institution by Nizām al-mulk, the great vizier of Alp Arslan and Malikshāh, was transferred to the West. Of his own many buildings, only one, at Khargird, still exists, while another, at Baghdad, has disappeared. From literature we know a few early madrasas in Syria; the oldest existing example of the type, built as a hospital, is the Mūrīstān of Nūr al-dīn at Damascus. From Syria the cruciform plan

<sup>1</sup> Who also built the Gōharshād mosque at Mashhad.



passed into Egypt. The Iranian origin of this type has sometimes been suspected, more often denied. There can be no doubt about its eminently Iranian character.

The movements in architecture which we have followed into much younger times, to show that they were not ephemeral, but fundamental and lasting, teach the same lesson as the study of sculpture: the Sasanian period is one of reaction. But that reaction is not very vigorous, more a casting off of Hellenistic thoughts that never had been integrally absorbed. The action of Hellenism was highly aggressive, the reaction was more the relapse into old principles that had never entirely ceased to live.

Since about A.D. 50 the female line of the Arsacids, the Atropatians, had come to the throne, in the religious sphere, too, a reaction had set in—perhaps aroused by the beginning of Christian and gnostic propaganda—that was terminated only after 300 years, and resulted in the organization of the Sasanian established church, the full triumph of the very oldest Magism of Atropatene. Of Zarathustrianism little can be discovered in that church. One of the many incidents in the movement was the writing down of the Avesta. The *Dēn-kart*, itself a remnant of that encyclopaedic work, contains two notices of this event.<sup>1</sup> The first attempt, under Volagases I, in Arsacidan script, cannot have been much more than a mnemonic help supplementary to oral tradition committed to memory. Under Ardāshir I this first Arsacidan text was transcribed into Sasanian script, together with a redaction of the contents. Shapur I added translations from Greek, Syriac, and Indian, thus creating a kind of encyclopaedia of general knowledge. Shapur II, less than 100 years later, evidently because oral tradition was completely wanting at his time, ordered the invention of a special script, which we call Avestic, for the books written in the dead dialects, proclaimed the whole work as the only valid canon, and

<sup>1</sup> One on the first page of Book IV from the time of Khusroy I, the other at the end of Book III from the ninth century.



interdicted every other doctrine. Therewith, the whole development was closed, although, under Khusroy I, sixth century, a new commentary was written. Thus already under Shapur II all intellectual life became paralysed, and Sasanian literature reveals a poverty of mind almost inconceivable and rarely attained elsewhere.

The author of the redaction of the Avesta under Ardashir, and probably at the same time the reorganizer of the new church, is called in the *Dēnkart* passages *Tansar*, and is high-priest. In Ibn Isfandiyār's History of Tabaristān a letter of his to a prince of Tabaristān is preserved, which Ibn Isfandiyār introduces as a translation by Ibn al-Muqaffa' from the Pahlavi original. The contents of the letter prove beyond doubt that it is indeed a translation, not an invention; but its historical milieu is that of the late, not of the early, Sasanian period. The treatise is an apology for Ardashir's, that is Tansar's, religious reforms in answer to the reproaches of the Tabari prince, and is sometimes so awkward that it must be based on genuine material. Another late Sasanian book, the *Ardavīrāz-nāmak*, also deals with Tansar's reform. The saintly reformer wins back the lost pure doctrine by going up to heaven and down to hell, during a long intoxication by hashish. The relationship of that story with Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which has long since attracted attention, is the book's only merit. Though here the author is called *Ardavīrāz* instead of Tansar, it is no contradiction, for Tansar is a proper name and *Ardavīrāz* an honorific, meaning approximately 'reformer of the moral law'.

There are three inscriptions in Fārs that are closely related to these problems and very possibly to the person of Tansar. The first, more than eighty lines long, but much damaged, is to the right of the sculpture of Shapur's triumph over Valerian at Naqsh i Rostam; the bust of a beardless dignitary, a high-priest, is figured over it. Ten years ago I discovered a second copy of that inscription, somewhat better preserved, added to a sculpture of Bahrām II at Sar-Mashhad. The end of the same inscription is written once more



beside the sculpture of Ardashir I at Naqsh i Rajab near Persepolis. Together they give a text, with many small and also some very large gaps, which originally must have had over 2,000 words, and of which the deciphering is still incomplete.

The author calls himself by several high titles, but remains anonymous. That is not astonishing. Already the Byzantine Theophylakt says (1. 9, 6) '*Kardarigan*—replacing the name of a Persian general—is a title, for the Persians love to call themselves by their title only'. And until titles were abolished a few years ago, prominent persons were generally known solely by their title. The author of the inscriptions, beside other honorific predicates, is high-priest, high-judge, and, from the place of his three inscriptions, he must have been governor of Pārs. His main designation is *Kartēr-Ohormizd*, i.e. Kartēr of the king Hormizd I, and Kartēr must be connected with Theophylakt's *Kardarigan* and similar titles of varied age,<sup>1</sup> which all signify, as far as it can be established, 'major-domo, vice-regent'. The Kartēr appears once more in the Paikuli inscription, dated in A.D. 293, since it tells the history of Narseh's victory over his grand-nephew Bahrām III. In his own inscriptions, which must be previous to Paikuli, he does not yet speak of Bahrām III and Narseh, but says that he served under five kings: Ardashir I, Shapur I, Hormizd I, Bahrām I and II, who overwhelmed him with eminence and honours. Therefore he must have been in official position from about 230 to 293, and must have been at least eighty when he wrote his inscriptions, ninety when he took sides with Narseh.

The remarkable inscription deals with religious questions. One passage, unfortunately isolated by gaps, speaks of the '[Zand]ik (Manichaeans), Jews, Shamans, Brahmans, Nazareans, Christians, and what [other religions there are]'. This passage receives light from a story in the chronicle of the Armenian Elishe Vardapet. After the Armenian rebellion

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Bab. *gardupatu*; the title of the magus Gaumāta in Trogus, corrupted into (C) *oropasta*, to be read *Cordopata*; Arab. *qahramān*; cp. *AMI*. v. 134 ff.



under Yazdegerd II, 438–57, the great *mōbedh*, in a speech, gives an historical recapitulation, and quotes the edict of a king Shapur, which—almost with the words of Frederick the Great, ‘in my country every man may go to heaven after his own fashion’—forbids every religious persecution: ‘the Magus, the Manichæan, the Jew, and the Christian, and what other sects there are, shall live in peace according to their religion’. The words, which the Armenian must have from a copy of the original document, cannot belong to Shapur II, as has been assumed, for they contradict the highly intolerant edict with which that king introduced the newly written Avesta: ‘Now, after the world has seen Our book, We will no longer tolerate anybody’s heterodoxy; that shall be Our untiring endeavour.’ The *Dēnkart* adds, ‘and he acted accordingly’, and we know of his persecutions of Christians. The words, accordingly, were those of Shapur I, and his edict is contemporary with the passage in the inscription of the Kartēr, who possibly composed it. Inscription and Armenian text complete each other.

The Kartēr further tells that he prayed to the gods for a token confirming his actions, and that he saw—seemingly in a vision—the reward and punishment of humanity in heaven and hell. The vision recalls a type of sepulchral inscription as represented in a short—but perhaps the oldest of this type—Aramaic inscription of a priest of the moon-god of Nērah.<sup>1</sup> There the dying priest has a comforting vision: ‘and with my eyes what do I see? Children of the fourth generation.’ The Kartēr, by his vision, is fortified in his belief which, from the tenor of the whole inscription, means the religion he had restored, and which people from all the provinces of the empire had accepted by tens of thousands. All this approaches so closely the contents of the letter of Tansar and the Arda-vīrāz book that I expect—once the decipherment is finished—to find that the anonymous author of the three inscriptions is the very same Tansar, reformer of religion under Ardashir and Shapur.

<sup>1</sup> Cooke, *N. Sem. Inscr.*, n. 65, pp. 189 ff.



To the religious tolerance of the first Sasanids their attitude towards Manichaeism testifies: that Shapur, at the request of his brother Pērōz, received Mani in audience on his coronation day, and accepted the dedication of the *Shāhpuhrakān* book; that Pērōz, as governor of Bactria, protected Mani and represented himself on his coins in adoration before 'Buddha the god'.<sup>1</sup> This tolerance was also to the advantage of the propagation of Christianity.

The chronicle of Arbela<sup>2</sup> records that Christianity had very early taken root in the regions around the Persian Gulf. Kashkar = S. 'Irāq, Mesene = Baṣra-Muhammera, Susa, RēwArdashir = Bushire, and, on the Arabian side, Qatr = Baḥrain were organized as bishoprics as early as A.D. 225.

From this time date some monuments on the island of Khārg, near Bushire and opposite Baḥrain,<sup>3</sup> a small coral-bank with good water and some vegetation, to-day inhabited by a few people, mostly negroes who fish for pearls and cut stone. Khārg is Ptolemy's *Arrhakia* or 'Alexander's Island', a rather enigmatical name, and probably Pliny's *Aracha* (vi. 111) 'with a very high mountain, sanctuary of Neptune'. To-day a fine Imāmzāde of a descendant of Ḥusain is the successor of the old temple.

The ruins were first described by Karsten Niebuhr about 1760, but remained unappreciated. Some sixty tombs are cut into the side of the coral bank; many may have disappeared as the result of quarrying. Most of them are plain and undecorated, but some of them still bear—probably all of them originally bore—crosses, and a few show traces of obliterated Syriac inscriptions in vertical columns. These are Christian tombs.

Two only are conspicuous by their architecture (Pls. XVIII and XIX). Their front, with pilasters and niches,

<sup>1</sup> *Mem. Arch. Surv. India*, 38; Herzfeld, *Kush-Sasan. Coins*, p. 30 f.

<sup>2</sup> Sachau, *Abhdlg. Preuss. Ak. d. W.*, 1915, 6, and *Z. Ausbr. d. Christ.*, *ibid.*, 1919, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. A. H. Stiffe, 'Pers. Gulf Notes, Khārag Island', *JRGS.* xii, 1898, pp. 179 ff., with map, surv. Lieut. Anderson, B.E., 1898.



Hellenistic in structure, strange and un-Greek in detail, shows some affinities to Ardashir's buildings at Firuzabad, which would assign the work to the third century. This date is confirmed by the plans. They are catacombs for up to fifty burials. We know a number of similar catacombs or other tomb-structures with the same interior disposition from Petra, Madā'in Šālīh in Arabia, near Jerusalem, and in Palmyra, some of the latter examples dating from the middle of the third century.<sup>1</sup>

The catacombs consist of a broad ante-room, which has three niches with three loculi each in both its short sides. This ante-room opens through three arches into the main chamber, which has five of the same niches on each side. The main sepulchre is in the background. In the other catacomb its opening is arranged sideways, and the middle of the back wall is occupied by a much-damaged sculpture, on which the large figure of a woman on a *kline* can just be distinguished, with some much smaller servants. The whole subject, posture, and arrangement is known from Palmyra.

These monuments of a limited art are not unpretentious. Measured against Roman catacombs, the works of such a far-away region merit notice. But greater is the historical interest: the propagation of Christendom on its way to India at such an early time. The men who made these tombs, like all people of the Gulf, must have been connected with the Indian trade, as described about A.D. 100 by the anonymous writer of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, or at the time of Justinian by Kosmas Indikopleustes.

Judaism, too, took advantage of the tolerance of the Sasanids, and has left a few old monuments. The best known

<sup>1</sup> Palmyra: from Sobernheim's and Otzen's survey with Strzygowski, *Orient od Rom?*; cp. Halabiyya in Sarre-Herzfeld, *Arch. Reise*, ii, fig. 345 and pl. LXXV; Petra: e.g. Brünnow-Domaszewski, *Prov. Arabia* i, figs. 222, 226, 240, 411, 428, 443; Madā'in Šālīh: Jaussen-Savignac, *Miss. Arch. en Arabie*, i, figs. 157, 174, 178, 183; Jerusalem: E. Brandenburg, *Felsarchitektur bei Jerus.*, 1926, tombs 24-6, 28 Sanhedrin, 27 near Onufrios Monastery, 29 Kidron valley, cp. 30-9.

is a tomb in Hamadan, universally called Esther's tomb (Pl. XX). It is a simple structure, impressive, if it were not for its commonplace environments. The building has been restored more than once in recent times. The oldest part is the underground tomb-chamber with a small opening in the summit of its vault, and two wooden cenotaphs, of which one is old, of the Mongol period, the other supposed to be a modern imitation of the original which was sold. The mother of two brothers, both bearing the title Jamāl al-daula, one of them minister of finances to the sultan Arghūn Khān, had these cenotaphs made in 1602 Alex. or A.D. 1291. The tomb is mentioned already 100 years before by the great traveller Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela. Hence 1,500 years after Esther's time people believed that the queen was buried there.

Even if there were an historical figure behind the legendary Esther there would be one strong objection against the identification of the tomb. The locality of the book of Esther is Susa, not Agbatana-Hamadan. But we can even positively prove whose tomb it is.

There is a Pahlavi pamphlet which bears the title '*Shahrhā ē Ērān*', the *Lands of Iran*, but deals only with its *towns*. Now, the Bundahishn, in a chapter 'on the nature of the mountains', quotes as its source the 'memoirs of the lands of Ērān, *Ayātkār ā Shahrhā ē Ērān*'. The corresponding chapters on the rivers, lakes, and seas must have used the same source, and the existing *Shahrhā*, the description of the towns, must be—although not unaltered—a fragment of the original. Some historical remarks make it probable that the book was written under the reign of Kavāt, about 500. Further, a unique manuscript of the geographer Ibn al-Faqīh, in the Mosque of Mashhad,<sup>1</sup> states on the authority of one of the first and best Arabic authors, Hishām b. al-Kalbī, that when the Sasanian princess Behafrīd was taken prisoner and her luggage was searched, a book was confiscated and translated for the governor Al-Hajjāj, the entire introduction of which Hishām

<sup>1</sup> Photographed by me, not yet published, fol. 94b.



copied. It obviously was the Baedeker of the princess, and was composed, as the introduction stated, for the king Kavāt. It was unquestionably the original, of which we only possess the fragment on the towns and the quotations in the Bundahishn. Those chapters all have the headline 'on the nature of the mountains etc.', and the book of the princess, too, was a strange collection of geographical character-sketches of Persia. It classified the Iranian countries as the hottest, coldest, unhealthiest, driest, most tiring, low-lying, those with the lightest water; their inhabitants as the most avaricious, the most stupid, the cleverest, the most jealous, the greatest liars, the most roguish, the most careless, the meanest; there are no other categories.

In § 26 of the chapter preserved it is said that Hamadan was founded by Yazdegerd I, 399-420. Hamadan, of course, is much older. To what the notice refers becomes clear in another section (47): Susa and Shushtar are built—obviously a wrong popular etymology—by the queen *Shūshandukht*, wife of Yazdegerd, mother of Bahrām V, and daughter of the 'king of the Jews' the *rēš-galūtak*. That is the important historical fact. The third statement is § 53: 'Gay is built by Yazdegerd at the request of his wife *Shūshandukht*, who founded a Jewish colony there.' Gay, later called al-Yahūdiyya, the ghetto, is the quarter of Isfahan with the great bazaar; almost all the Muhammedan sanctuaries of that quarter are converted from the Jewish. The notice, dated only eighty years after the event, is as true as the information regarding Hamadan. The Jewish colonies of Hamadan and Isfahan do not go back, as is supposed, to the Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian epoch, but to the beginning of the fourth century A.D. And the combination is obvious: the so-called tomb of Esther is the tomb of queen Suzan who founded the Jewish colony there. In *Shūshandukht*, the mythical queen Esther became a reality; after 800 years her name was forgotten, her role not.

I found another trace of queen Suzan in 1923 in Linjān near Isfahan (Pl. XX). The usual modern name is Pīr



Bakrān, after the large sanctuary of a Sūfī who lived and died there in 1307; but it is still known as Esther Khātūn, the same identification as in Hamadan. The building of the Sūfī is a sumptuous imitation of the Tāq i Kisrā. In the floor a rock is shown with the impression of a horse's hoof, with which the name of the prophet Elijah is linked, as if Elijah went to heaven from there. The rock, perhaps, was originally meant to replace the rock in the temple of Jerusalem. The Sūfī has usurped this Jewish sanctuary. Near to it stands a curious building, part of the original, called *ṣuffa sayyid Mōshē*, sofa of lord Moses. It consists of various parts: a circular chamber—almost unique—with a parabolic cupola, from which one must crawl through a passage, only 3 feet high and closed by a stone door, into three small chambers, called *ziyāretgāh*, place of pilgrimage of Sarāh bat Ashir (Gen. xlv. 17), Jacob's grand-daughter, who surely never came to this place.

The only explanation might be that the colony belonged to the tribe Asher. A truncated conical stone for one large and twelve small candles is the furniture of the room. In another one I observed a pillar with four small responds at the corners, ninth century, cut off to serve as desk for the Bible. The sanctuary as a whole goes back to the time of its foundation. From outside it does not look like a building but like a marl-formation. There was never, of course, a distinct Jewish or Christian art in these lands; the general style of the various periods was simply followed.

Looking back on the general developments during the Sasanian period in Iran, we must emphasize that there is no continuous development in art arising from spontaneous creative power. It is no sovereign art that creates its own law. A period of 500 years of complete surrender to Hellenism is followed, under the Sasanian empire, by a period in which the foreign influences and elements are expelled: half a conscious reversive movement, half an unconscious relapse into previous stages; a reaction with weak activity. Before being terminated, the political status is completely changed



by the Arab conquest. The artistic movement, however, is not discontinued, but goes on, and Iran in the Muhammedan period becomes a factor even stronger than before in that much greater reaction against Europe of which Islam was the exponent—a reaction which caused the deep gulf between Europe and Asia during the Middle Ages that has not been bridged over until the present day.

# INDEX

Abdagates = 'Abdān, 64.  
 Acanthus, 49, 69.  
 Acts of St. Thomas, 57, 61 f., 64.  
 Adiabene, Saka dynasty of, 8.  
 Agbatana = Hamadān: foundation, 17; 20 f.  
 — description of Herodotus, 22.  
 — of Polybios, 22.  
 — documents discovered in, 23.  
 — Jewish colony, 106.  
*Aḡsurīnīk*, 93.  
 Aleppo = Halab, sanctuary of Abraham, 59 f.  
 Alexander, birth legend, 52.  
 Alexandria, library, 53.  
 Annabani, sculptures and inscriptions, 3, 79.  
 Anān, Anzan = Pārsā, 24 ff., 46.  
*Apadana* of Persepolis, 46, 82, 94.  
 Arch, parabolic, in Urartu and ancient Iran, 35.  
 Architecture: in NW. Iran, Assyrian epoch, 12 ff.  
 — Urartean, main features, 17, 35.  
 — Seleucid in Iran, 49 f.  
 Ardashīr Khurra = Firuzabad, 76.  
 Ardashīr's castle near Firuzabad, 95 f.  
*Ardavīrāz-nāmak*, 100.  
 Ariana, 9.  
 Armenia, metallurgy, 1.  
 — cf. Urartu, 11, 16 f., 35.  
 Armour, arms, crests in Sasanian Iran, 78.  
 Arsacids, female branch of, from Atropatene, 38, 56, 63, 99.  
*Artaxerxes-riaxšātra*, 41.  
 — exclusive name of Achaemenids and successors, 76 f.  
 Aru.ūku, hypocoristic = Arvant, 25 n. 2. \*  
 Aryans and Indo-Aryans, home and migrations, 7 ff.  
 Āryāramna, gold-tablet of, 23 f., 26, 40.  
 Arzabā hills (cf. Erezīfya), 12, 19.  
 Asklepiodoros, satrap of Persis, 45 f.  
 Assyrian sculptures representing NW. Iranian towns, 12 ff.  
*Artidān* = oothecae, 38 n. 1, 39.  
 Asyages—*ārtiāga*, 40.  
 Avesta, fixed by writing, 38, 52 f., 99.

Babylon, palace of Nebuchadnezzar, 27; 29; 30.  
 Bactria, Greek empire, 58.  
*Bagān* = divine, title of Frātadāra, 47, 76.  
*Bagastāna*, cult-place of *bagā*, 40.  
 Bahman = Dārāya Vahumanū, 77.  
 Bahram I, rock sculpture at Bishapur, 79, 82.  
 Bahram II, sculptures at Bishapur, 83 ff.  
 — at Naqsh i Bahram, 87.  
 — at Sar Mashhad, 100 f.  
*barsam*-wand, 31, 47.  
 Behistūn, sculpture of Darius, 3.  
 — Arsacidan sculptures, 46 f., 54 f., 63, 81.  
 Bishapur, rock sculptures, 83-7.  
 Bit Hamban = Kampanda, Cambandus, 3, 9, 56.  
 Brāhōi = Ibrāhīmi, 59.  
 Bronze figure of a captive, Moscow, 6.  
 — vessel from Nihawand, 6 f.  
 — basins on tripods, 15 n. 1.  
 — bronzes from Van, Brit. Mus., 35.  
 Burial customs, Zoroastrian, 36 ff.  
 — Magian, 39.  
 Cadusii, 18.  
 Cambyse, his suicide, 36.  
 — his tomb, 36.  
 — name, 40.  
*Čār-tāq* = *čūār-gapu* 'four gates', 88, 90.  
 Caspians, 2 n. 2, 12.  
 Catacombs, Christian, 103 ff.  
 Christendom at Persian Gulf, 104.  
 Coffered ceilings, 68.  
 Coin devices as dating evidence, 70, 73.  
 Coins, Stakhrian, 76 f., 80 f.  
 — Bactrian, 87.  
 — Kushano-Sasanian, 103.  
 Cruciform plan, origin of, 97 f.  
 Ctesiphon, Tāq i Kusrā at, 93 f., 95.  
 Cult of snakes, 4, 5.  
 Cyaxares = *haxštra*, 40.  
 Cygus I, 24 ff., 26, 37, 40.  
 Dā u Dukhtar, rock-tomb, 32, 37 f., 51.



- Dahyūpatī*—'king of the lands', 21, 24.  
*Daxma*, 38 n. 1.  
 Dara = Darius in Iranian legend, 52, 76 f.  
*Dāraya-zahumash*, 40.  
 Darius, tomb inscription, 41 f.  
 — OP. inscription in Aramaic script, 48.  
 Deioces and Deiocids, 20, 78.  
 Dēnkart, 94, 99, 100, 102.  
 Dionysiac elements in art, 69.  
 Domed buildings, Sasanian, 88 ff., 93, 97.  
 Dukkān i Dāūd, rock-tomb, 30.  
 Elam, 2, 5 f., 24 f., 27.  
 Ellipi, 2, 9, 12, 26.  
 Epics, Iranian, and history, 18 ff.  
 Equation between names of Iranian legend and O.T., 59 f.  
 Ērānshahr, 9.  
 Ērānvēj, original home of Aryans, 7, 18.  
 Erezifya, *see* Arzabā.  
 Esther's tomb, Hamadan, 105 ff.  
 Esther Khatun at Linjan, 107.  
*Evangelium de transitu Mariae*, 64.  
 Exposure of bodies, Magian custom, 38 f.  
 Fakhrīqa, rock-tomb, 31.  
 Falsification of inscriptions, 82.  
 Farāshband in Gīra, 92.  
 Female inheritance in Sakastan, 64.  
 Feudalism in Iran, 55, 63, 78, 81, 92.  
 Fire-altars, 67, 89 f.  
 Fire-temples, Arsacidan, 66 f., 88.  
 — Sasanian, 88 ff., 93.  
 Fires, natural, 93.  
 Firuzabad, sculptures of Ardashīr, 55, 57, 78.  
 — town, 76.  
 — *tirbāl* ruin, 90.  
 — palace, 90, 95 f., 104.  
*Framdār*—'judge', 43.  
*Fraštār*, 63.  
 Frātadāra dynasty, 45 f.  
 — sculpture and coinage, 76.  
 Front-view of kings, 87 f.  
 Gable on religious buildings, 15 f.  
 Gaumata, 36, 39.  
 Geopothros = *gūpuhr*, 56, 57, 92.  
 Gīra, fire-temples of, 91 ff.  
 Gods and men in paintings, 71.  
 Gold in OP. architecture, 22.  
 Gotarzes I = Gōdarz, 55, 92.  
 Gotarzes, II, 56, 64, 78, 85.  
 Gotarzes, minister of Bahram V, 92.  
 Graeco-Bactrian architecture and arts, 67 ff., 71.  
 Graffiti of human heads, OP., 73 f.  
 — of kings of Istakhr, 80 f.  
 Greek inscriptions, Persepolis, 44.  
 Gundopharr, king of Sakastan, 62, 63.  
 Haitomant = Helmand river, 61.  
 Haltamti = Elam, 2 n. 1, 26 n. 1.  
 Hāmūn Lake—*kansavya*, 61.  
*Handiāgā* = *andarz*, 'testament', 41.  
 Hatra, 28, 88.  
 Hecataeus, 20.  
 Hellenism, idea of, 51 f., 71.  
 Historiography, unknown in Iran, 17 f.  
 Hōrēn, rock-sculpture and inscription, 3.  
 Hormuza, port, 26.  
 Houses, types of, 29 f., 32 ff., 97 f.  
 Hudimeri, 25, 26 n. 1.  
 Hundur, town—mod. Qutur, 12, 19.  
*Hulhemuranakara*, 10 n. 3.  
 Hūvaža, a Persian tribe, 27.  
 Ibn al-Faqlh, MS. in Mashhad mosque, 105.  
 Ibn al-Muqaffa', 94, 100.  
 Iranians, immigration of, 9 ff.  
 Isfahan, Assyrian epoch, 12.  
 — Achaemenian epoch, 46, 53.  
 — Jewish colony, 106.  
 Isidor of Charax, 38, 50.  
 Istakhr, 5, 45 f., 48 f.  
 Judaism in Sasanian Iran, 104 ff.  
 Ka'aba i Zardusht, 35, 37\*60.  
 Kandahar = Gundopharron, 63.  
 Kale i Dukhtar in Khurasaan, fire-temple, 89.  
 Kangawar, 50.  
 Katigdiz, mythical castle, 22.  
*Kardarigan*, 101.  
*Karīr*, title, 101.  
 Kaspar = Gundopharr, 65.  
 Kavāt, founder of Kavi dynasty, 19 f.  
 —, Sasanid, 106.  
*Kandī* = colt, *kardak* = foundling, 19 f., 78.  
*Kandakān*, fire of Agbatana, 19.  
 Kavi = Kayanids, 18 ff., 78.  
 Kelishin inscription, 11, 14.  
 Khārg, island, 103 ff.  
 Khargird, madrasa of Nizām al-mulk, 98.  
 — — of Qiwām al-dīn, 98.

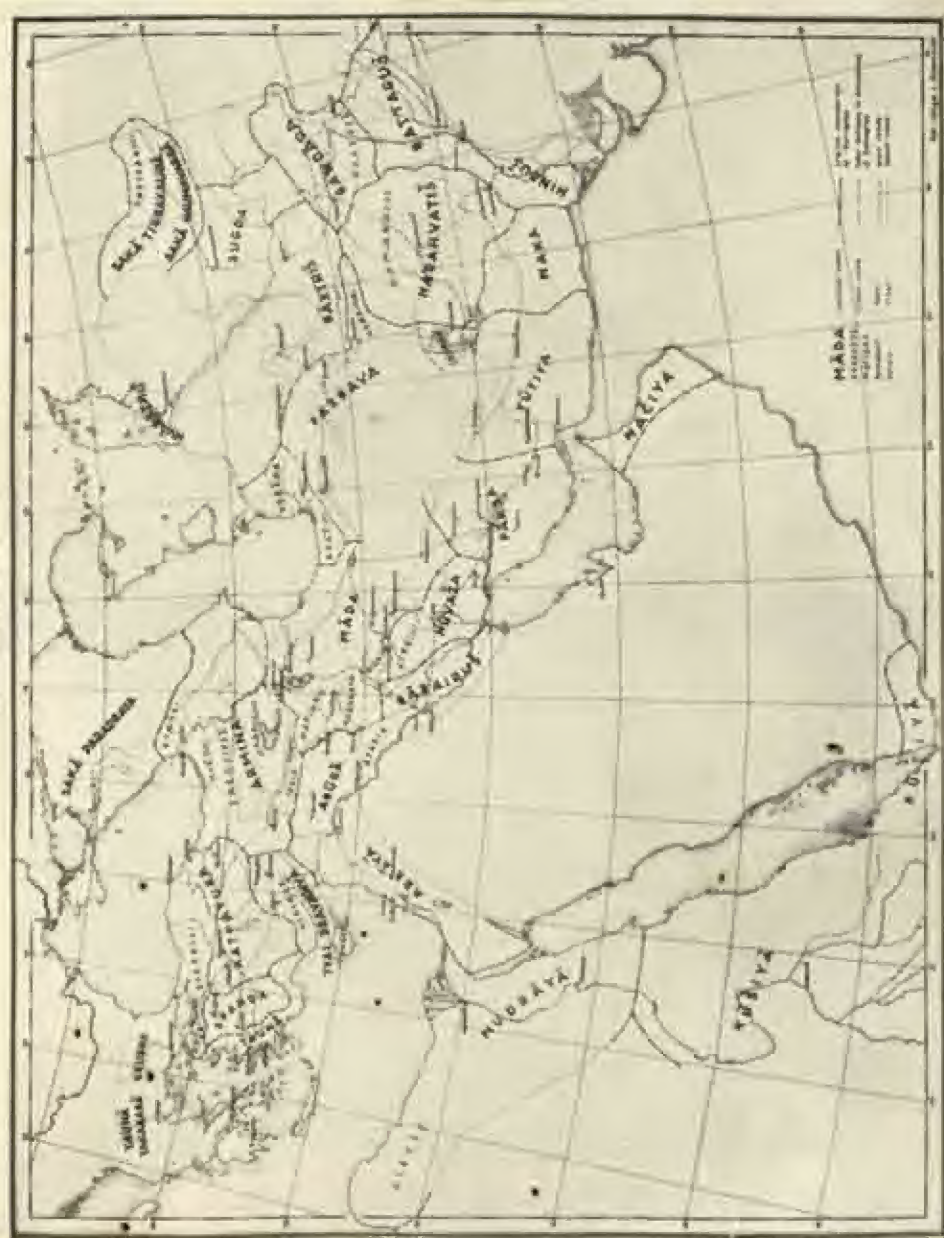
*Xrašt* and *drašt*, 41 f.  
*Khahathrita*, *Xlaštita*, 13, 21, 40.  
*Khurha*, temple, 50 ff.  
*Khudja*, 59; 62.  
*Khvār* district, 10 f.  
*Akward*, weapon of *Vrthagna*, 63.  
 Kings, representation in Iranian art,  
 70, 87.  
*Kišim*, town, 13, 14, 21.  
*Kisra*, 94.  
*Kuri* and *ganganna*, 15 n. 1.  
*Kleitarchos*, description of *Persepolis*,  
 29.  
*Kophasates* = *Kōhzhāb*, 55, 62, 63.  
*Kossaeans* and *Kāšu*, 2.  
*Krāspa*, myth, 63.  
*Kudmar*, *kudimeru*, 26 n. 1.  
*Kūh i Khwāja*, 50, 55, 58-74, 81, 87,  
 89.  
*Kuk* u *Kōhzhāb*, 62.  
*Kurangūn* rock sculpture, 4 ff.  
  
*Linjān*, *Pir Bakrān*, 106 f.  
*Loin-cloth* dress and kilt, 3 f., 5.  
*Lotus-roses*, 68.  
*Lullu*, *Lullubi*, 2, 3, 12.  
  
*Madai* = *Modes* as general term, 9 f.  
*Madrasa*, architectural type of, 98.  
*Magi*, three, 61; 64 f.  
*Magic ideas* in sculpture, 82, 84, 86.  
*Makān Ibrāhīm* at *Aleppo*, 80.  
*Man*, *Mannaia*, *Mannaeans*, 9, 11,  
 16, 31.  
*Manichaean* pentad, 43.  
*Marwdaht*, plain of *Persepolis*, 5, 6.  
*Messiah*, expectation of, 62.  
*mexis trituratoria* = *arto*, *krōna*, 60, 61.  
*Mihrnarsch*, *vizier*, 91 f.  
*Mitanni*, 7, 8.  
*Mithradates II*, 8, 54, 63.  
 — sculpture at *Behistun*, 46 f., 54 f.,  
 63.  
*Mithrates* = *Mihrān*, 55.  
*Mont Victoralis*, 61 f.  
*Mouynoikoi*, 35.  
*Mūristān* of *Nūr al-dīn*, *Damascus*, 98.  
*Mūzāsir*, town, 12, 13 n. 1.  
 — temple, 14-17, 32, 35.  
*Mystical origin* of founders of dynasty  
 or religion, 19 ff.  
  
*Naqsh i Rajab*, inscription and sculp-  
 tures, 101 f.  
*Naqsh i Rustam*, *Elamite* sculpture,  
 3 f.  
 — royal tombs, 31 f., 36.  
 — *Ka'aba i Zardusht*, 35.

*Naqsh i Rustam*, *Sasanian* sculptures  
 of *Ardashīr I*, 81.  
 — of *Shapur I*, 83, 85, 87, 100.  
*Naram Sin*, stele, 3.  
*Nihawand*, figurines, 4, 6.  
*Nisak*, tombs of *Aracid* kings, 38.  
*Nērūz* = *New Year*, pilgrimages, 60.  
  
*Ogyris*, island, 25 n. 1.  
*Old-Iranian* dialects, time limits, 10 f.,  
 47 f.  
*Old-Persian* language in *Aramaic*  
 script in *Achaemenian* offices, 48.  
*Olympias*—*Alongos*, 52.  
*Opus Imperfectum*, commentary to  
*Gospel of St. Matthew*, 61 f.  
*Orthagnes*, *Aracid*, 64.  
  
*Paikuli* inscription, 82, 101.  
*Paintings* of *Kūh i Khwāja*, 67-74.  
 — *Buddhist* in *Central Asia*, 84.  
*Palmette*-compositions, 69.  
*Pāpak*, graffiti design of, 81.  
*Paphlagonian* tombs, 32.  
*Pāra* = *Pārs*, pre-*Achaemenian* his-  
 tory and name, 24-7.  
*Parsondas* = *Fransasya*, 18.  
*Parsual* = *Pāra*, 9, 10 n. 1, 45.  
*Parthava* = *Parthians*, in *Assyr.* an-  
 nals, 9.  
 — origin of, 53 f.  
*Pasargadae*, 22, 26, 27 f., 35, 76, 95.  
*Patihedra*, 10 f.  
*Persepolis*, 13, 15, 22, 28 f., 35, 44.  
 — name, 45, 95.  
 — sculptures, 83, 85, 86, 87.  
*Phrygian* tombs, 15, 35.  
*Pigtail*, 4, 6.  
*Plaster-decoration*, 74.  
*Proto-Ionic* columns, 32, 51.  
*Psychological system* of *Bundahishn*,  
 42.  
  
*Qaṣr i Shirin*, palace and temple, 88.  
  
*Religion* of *Achaemenids*, 37 ff., 41.  
*Religious tolerance* of *Shapur I*, 101,  
 103.  
 — intolerance of *Shapur II*, 102.  
*Rēshahr* = *Rēw Ardashīr*, 25, 103.  
*Rustam*, 62 ff.  
  
*Sahna*, rock tomb, 31.  
*Saka*, migration of 130 n.c., 7 f., 53.  
 — dynasty in *Kirkūk*, 8.  
 — empire in *Iran* and *India*, 8, 63 f.  
*Sakastan*, origin of empire, 54.  
*Sakawand* = *Sikayahvant*, 39.



- Samarra, 98.  
 Sangibuti = Sahand, 12, 13, 19.  
 Sarā son of Ibrāhīm, 59, 62.  
 SAR-bāni-birini, 3.  
 Sar Maahhad, inscription and sculpture, 100 f.  
 Sarpul, rock-sculptures, 2 f.  
 Sāsān, etymology of, 77 f.  
 Sasanids, descent, 76.  
 Shāhnāme, 55, 57, 62, 64.  
 Shahrhā ē Ērān, 105 f.  
 Shapur, elder brother of Ardashir I, 77.  
 Shapur II, writing of Avesta in Avesta script, 53, 99.  
 Shiite Imams, 93.  
 Shutruk Nahhunte, inscribed bricks, 6.  
 Sodola = Sodella = Sandrōkh-Sindrōdh, 61 f.  
 Sōshans, Messiah of Zoroastrianism, 61 f.  
*Spāhmasda* = *madaktram*, *hamaspāhmasda*, 60.  
*Suffa sayyid Māshē*, 107.  
 Sūrēn, dynasty of Sakastan, 55, 63.  
 Survival of cults, 28, 60-2.  
 Suzan, queen = Shūshandukht, 91, 106.  
 Symmetry, aesthetic postulate, 82, 97, 98.  
 Syncretism, Hellenistic, 44.  
 Tabriz = Tarwakisa, 12, 13, 19.  
 Takht i Rustam in Shahriyār, 88 f.  
 Tamerlane's legendary descent, 52.  
 Tansar, high-priest, 100-2.  
 Tāq, 94.  
 Tāq i Bustān, 79.  
 Tāq i Kisrā (cf. Ctesiphon), 107.  
 Taahstepe inscription, 11.  
 Teispes, Thespises, 37, 46.  
 Tell Halaf, goddess of, 4.  
 Temples, Old-Persian, 28, 34, 44.  
 Thamanacans = Sāmāna, 9.  
*Tūrdēl* = *parābīl* = *tetrapylon*, 90.  
 Tiridates, Arsacid, 38.  
 —, journey to Rome, 65.  
 Titles of Iranian chieftains, 12, 21.  
 Tomb of Cyrus, 28, 33, 36, 38.  
 Tombs, various types of, 36 ff.  
 Tournaments, 56, 78.  
 Turan and Turanians, 18.  
 Urartu, Urartacans, 9, 11, 16, 36.  
*Uš-frandān—rūdēd*, 42 f.  
*Uš* = *auri*, *aurora*, 60.  
 Ushidā, mount, 60 f.  
 Ušāq i Farhād, unfinished tomb, 31.  
 Valerian, emperor, 83, 85.  
 Van = Topraqqale, 16, 35.  
 Varhrān-fires, 19.  
 Vishtāspa, 37, 40, 43, 53, 62, 65.  
 Vision before death, in inscriptions, 102.  
 Vivahana = *raivadana*, eponym of Gēwpuhrān, 57.  
 Volagases I, 38, 52 f., 99.  
 Vrthragna myth, 40, 63.  
 Wamitārī = Vahmyatarāh, 20 f., 40.  
 Wēžan, Hyrcanian, 57, 64, 68.  
 Xerxes = *Xšayāršāh*, 40 f.  
 Zarathustra, tomb, 37.  
 Zarathustra's psychological and juridical thoughts, 43.  
 — Ibrāhīm Zardusht, 60 ff.  
 — lived on Kūh i Khwāja, 62.  
 Zariadres = Zarēr, 65.

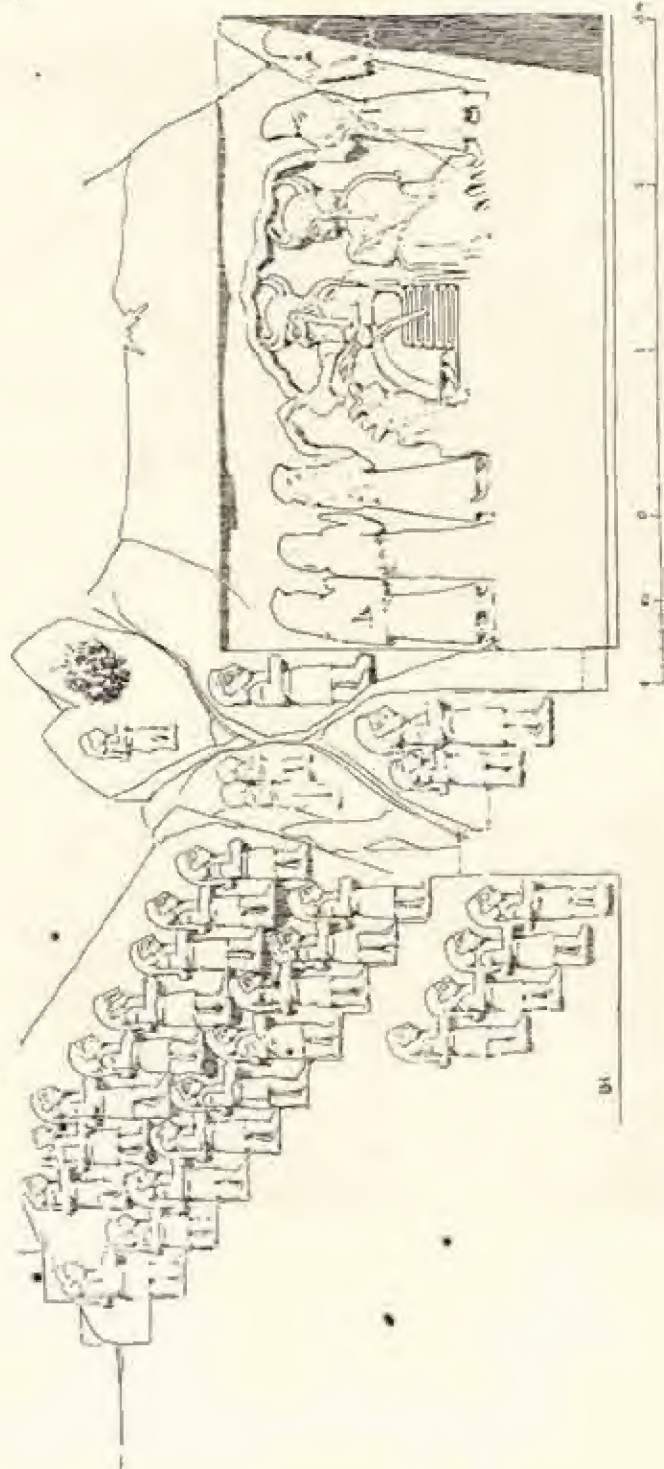
MAP OF ACHAEMENIAN EMPIRE  
TIME TABLE - 500 BCE







ROCK-SCULPTURE OF KURANGÜN



ROCK-SCULPTURE OF KURANGÓN





ROCK-SCULPTURE OF BAHRĀM II, AT NAQSH I RUSTAM OVER OLD  
ELAMITE SCULPTURE

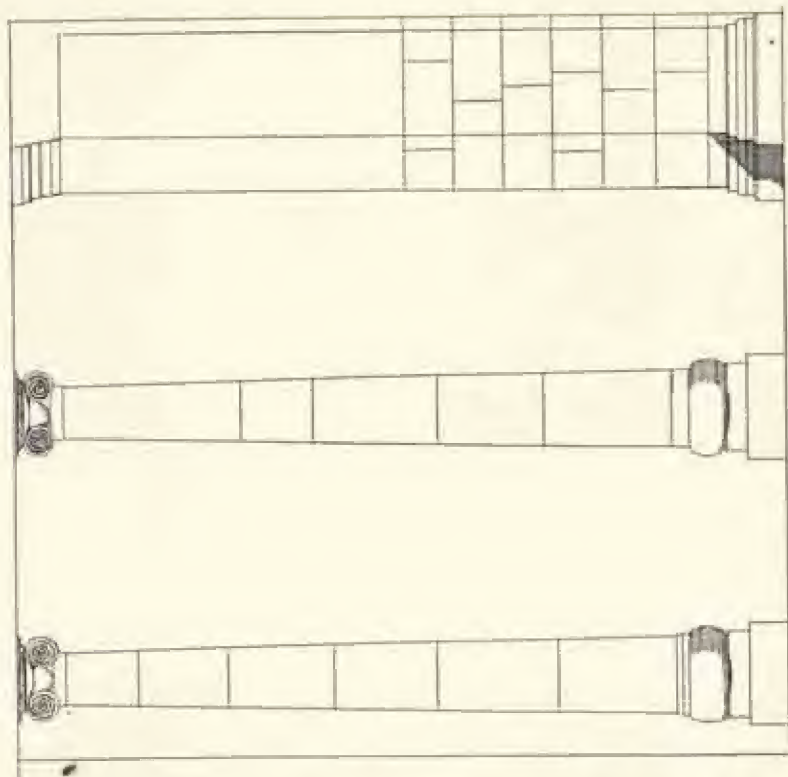


ACHAEMENIAN TOMBS OF ĀKHUR I RUSTĀM



ROCK-TOMB OF DĀ U DUKHTAR





TEMPLE OF KHURHA





KOH I KHWĀJA



ROCK-SCULPTURES OF MITHRADATES II AND GOTARZES II AT BISUTUN



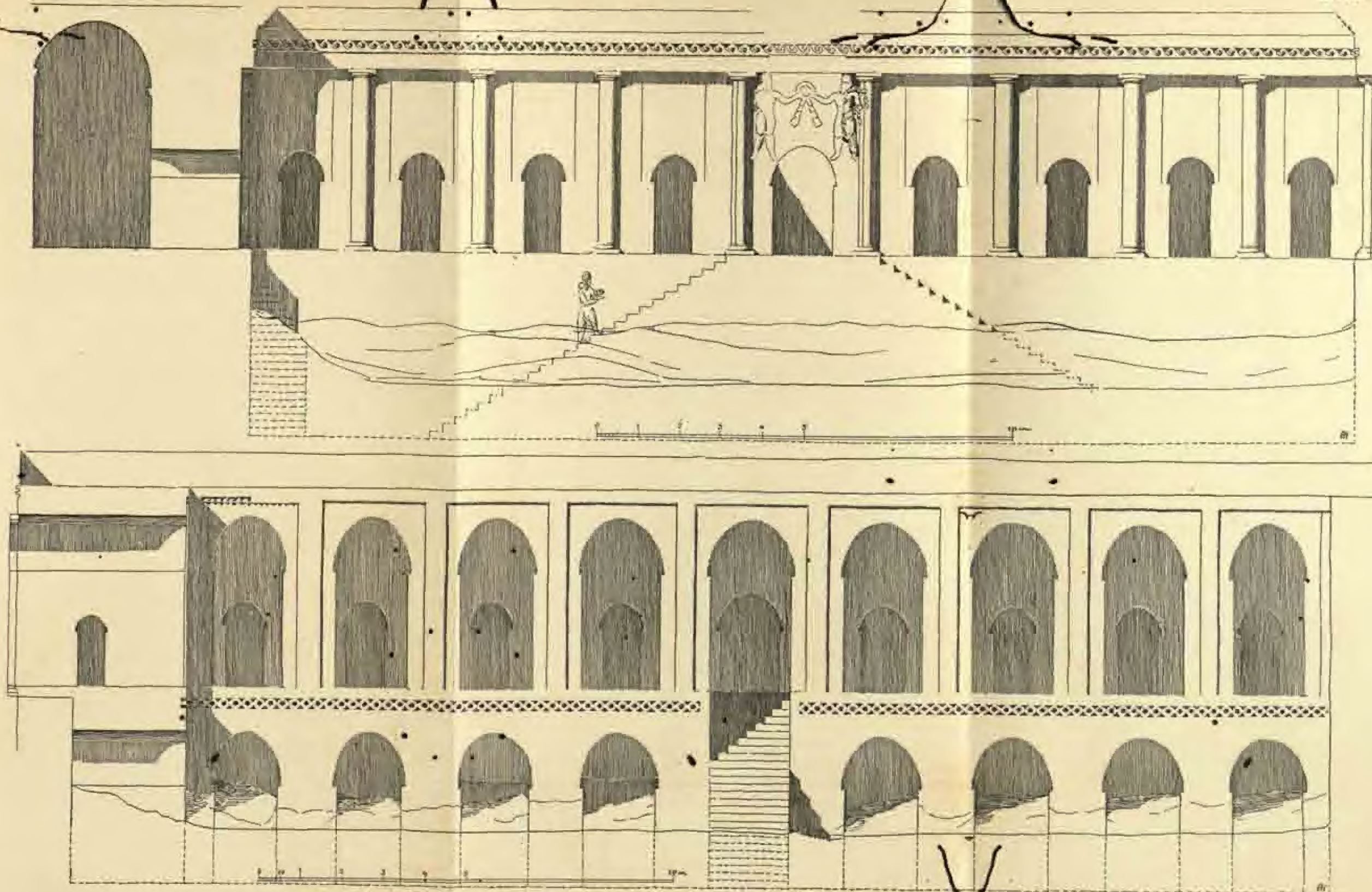


KŌH I KHWĀJA, GALLERY WITH PAINTINGS



KŌH I KHWĀJA, FRONT OF GALLERY AND TEMPLE





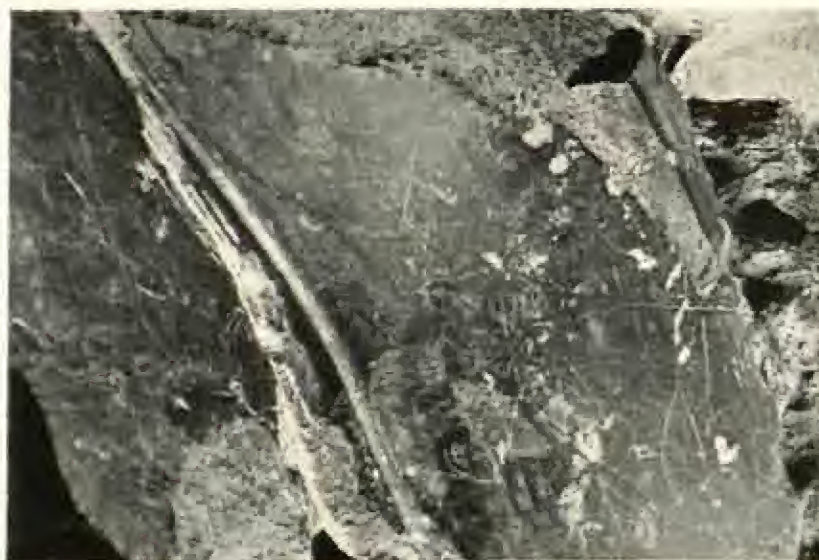
KCH I KHWĀJA, THE TWO PERIODS OF THE MAIN FAÇADE OF THE COURT







KICH I KIHWAJA, STUCCO  
ORNAMENT



GRAFFITO ON FRAGMENT OF SCULPTURE  
OF DARIUS, FROM PERSEPOLIS





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SHAPUR, SHAPUR I AND VALERIAN



SHAPUR, THE ARMY OF SHAPUR I



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SHAPUR, TRIBUTE-BEARERS



KALE I DUKHTAR, NEAR FIRUZABAD





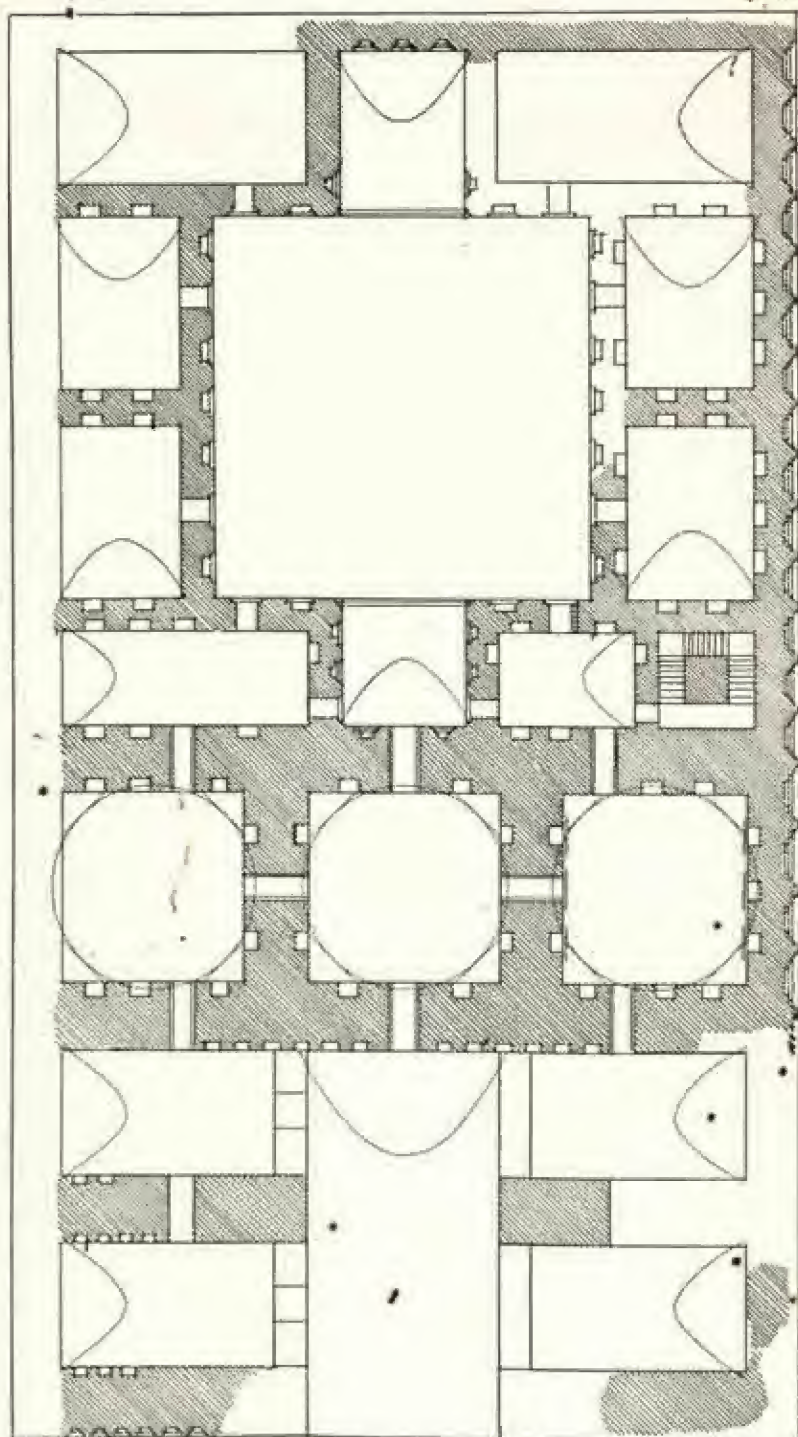


FIRUZABAD, COURTYARD OF ARDASHIR'S  
PALACE

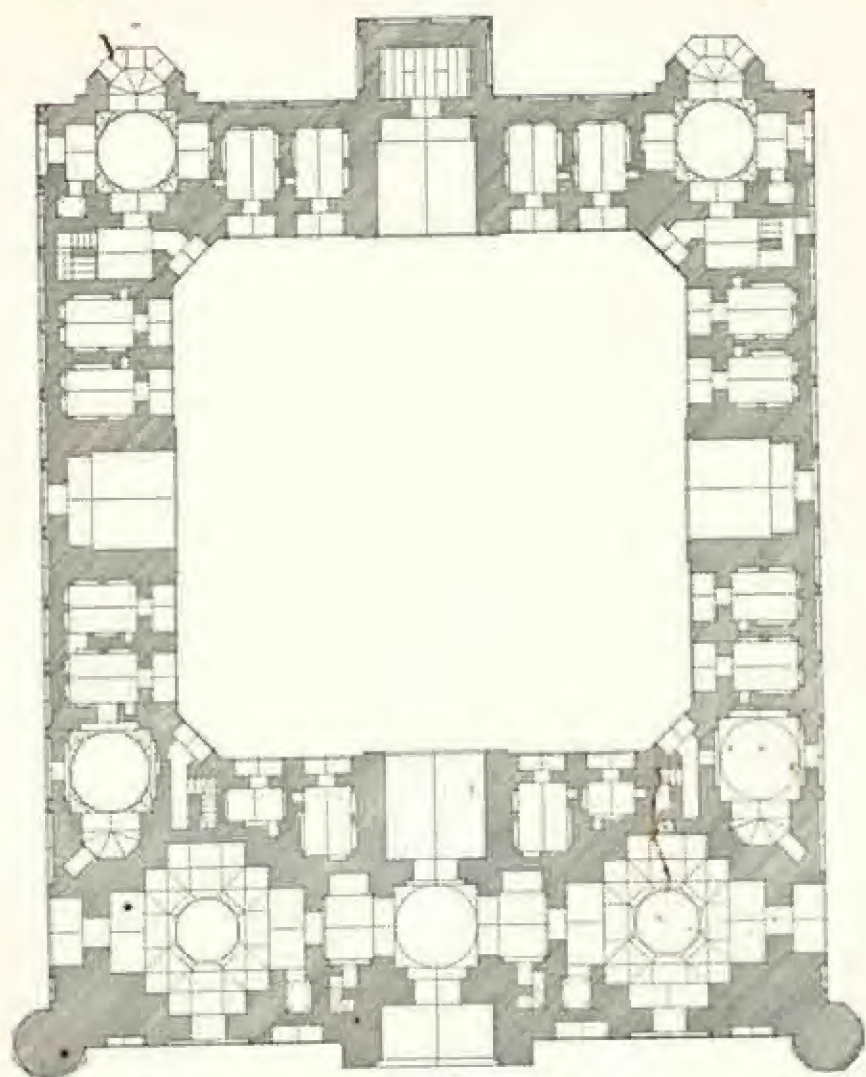


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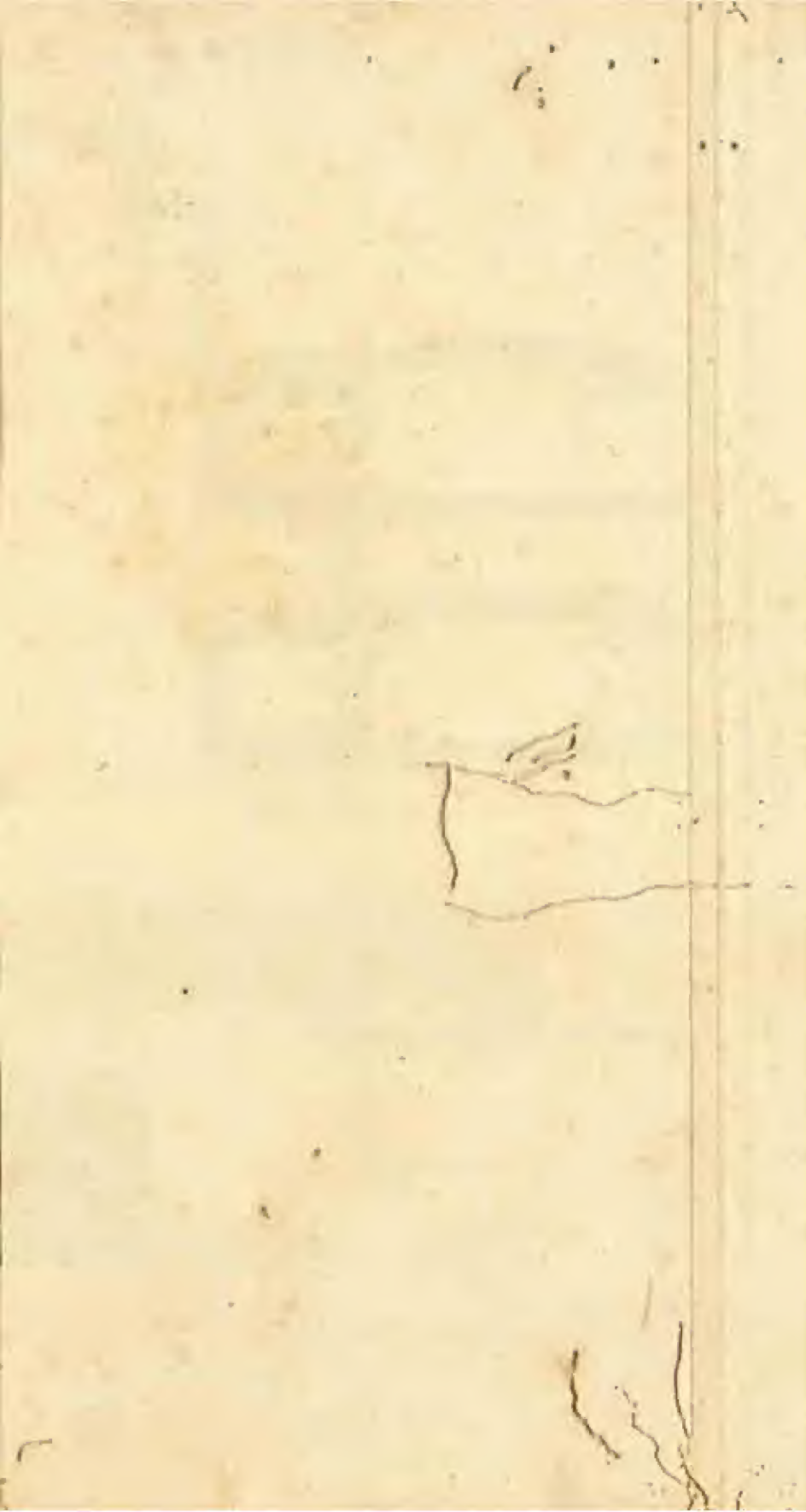
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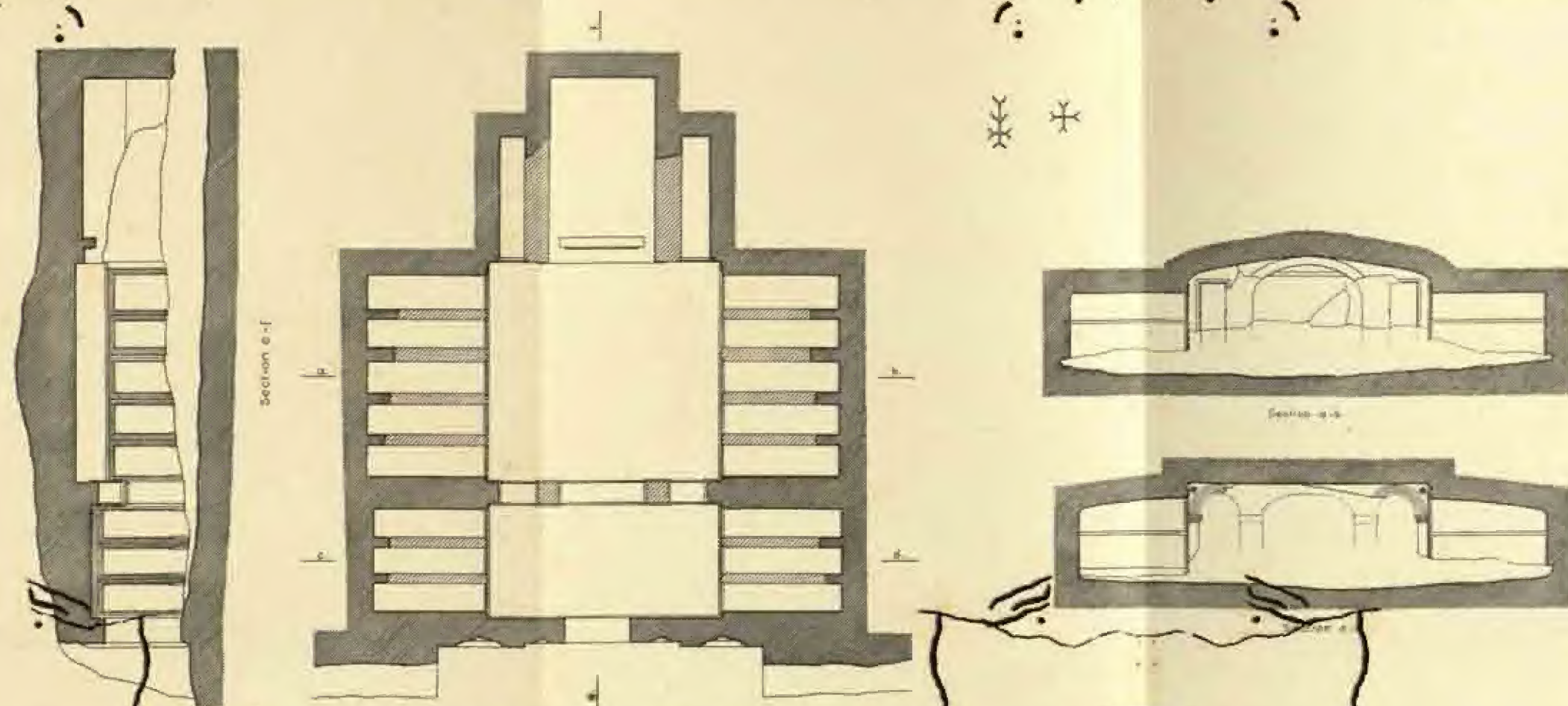
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